



# Ecclesia

The Newsletter of the Catholic Diocese of Pembroke

April 2020

*Upon going to press, the situation of our country and of our world as related to the COVID-19 virus is unknown. Consequently, all events and activities occurring in the near future mentioned in this Newsletter could be cancelled and/or postponed. Thank you for your understanding.*

## Twining with the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas



Archbishop Murray Chatlain, priests, sisters and lay leaders of the Diocese at the 2019 Annual Diocesan Study Days held in The Pas, MB.

The 'twining' of Catholic dioceses and/or parishes is a partnership initiative intended to build relationships and lead to mutual cooperation and support.

As Archbishop Richard Smith, Edmonton Diocese, explained to the *Catholic Register* in 2012, "This type of twinning arrangement goes back to the 1990s when Blessed John Paul II in his apostolic letter *Ecclesia in America* encouraged the dioceses of the Western Hemisphere to consider ways that they may enter partnerships with one another of mutual support."

Charged with looking after our own, a committee in Canada (of which Archbishop Murray Chatlain, Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas, was a member), considered the needs of people in our north and divided the country southern to northern for support.

That support can take on a few different forms including: 1. the loan of priests, 2. other 'human resource' support, e.g., lay people, communications staff, youth leaders, etc., and 3. financial, explained Archbishop Chatlain.

A few years ago, the Diocese of Pembroke twinned with the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas.

When then Bishop of Pembroke Michael Mulhall and Archbishop Chatlain discussed the twinning, they spoke of working to build relationships, sharing prayer, and learning to understand each other.

"It's delicate in that often people come with good will, but don't know the culture, history and language," said Chatlain about the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas.

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### About the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas

**Chancery location:** The Pas, Manitoba

**Cathedral:** Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

**Area served:** 430,000 kms spanning Northern Saskatchewan and Northern Manitoba

**Population:** 113,271 made up of a culture that is rich and diversified with approximately 78% First Nation people (Cree, Ojicree, Dene and Métis) and 22% other ancestries.

**Number of parishes:** 50

**Served by:** 19 priests, 3 sisters and 1 deacon (their travel costs and vehicle repair bills exceeded \$73,000 in 2019)

**Missions:** 14 missions are fly-in only, with ice roads available in winter months







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He suggests that once a particular group is identified—a school, a parish, a community—it's important that the supporting group takes the time to talk to and get to know the group or community they are supporting, and ask 'what would you most benefit from' in order to fill a real need.

## Getting involved

The process of twinning is initiated at the level of bishop (his office/administrator) to bishop, so that it can be organized and tracked to ensure that support reaches the gaps and twinning isn't repeated in one area.

"If some people in the diocese of Pembroke have it in their hearts, we are always looking for 'champions' and we try to hook them up with champions here to see if some fruit can come from it," noted Chatlain.

The relationships can start simply with prayer, prayer intentions, and phone calls, building up to a visit.

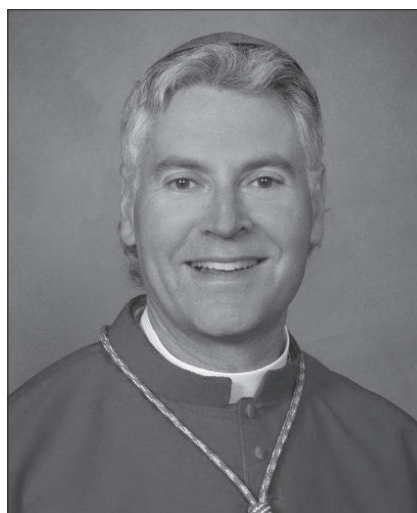
"I would encourage some trips—it's kind of tricky with the distance, but it's possible. If two or three people came to visit a place that's open and interested,

and participate in the community, a spiritual gathering, they could ask 'what are you interested in/hopeful for,'" suggested Chatlain.

The Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas, with its remote location, vast territory and unique needs, participates in multiple twinning programs.

One partnership involves a youth group from Saskatoon called Face-to-Face, made up of university students. They made a 14-hour trek during their winter break to carry out ministry including confirmation preparation, attending local carnivals, and organizing youth gatherings. The group planned to return again this year to continue building the relationship.

In another twinning, a Winnipeg youth group travelled six hours by car followed by six hours on a train to reach an isolated Cree community and work with young people there, organizing a vacation Bible-type school.



Parishes in Regina have fundraised to help with heating bills for the church and rectory and to assist with a school lunch program for students.

"It takes real work and commitment, it's not easy to do missionary work," noted Chatlain.

Another opportunity to help is through an organization called LAMP\* which is always looking for volunteers for its summer vacation Bible schools. Participants are asked to make a commitment over

time and to fundraise for travel costs. Currently, many of the volunteers are from other churches and come from the U.S. for an adventure in the Canadian north.

"It would be nice to have more Canadian/Catholic volunteers," said Chatlain. "We would ensure they go to Catholic communities."

\*LAMP is a cross-cultural ministry sharing Jesus Christ with God's people in remote areas of Canada. <https://www.lampministry.org/#/about-our-ministry/>

## The path towards a new Bishop

At the drafting of this article, the Diocese of Pembroke has yet to see a new Bishop named to lead our faith community. As anxious as we all may be, the path towards naming a new Bishop is a thorough one that will not be rushed.

"The process for selecting candidates for the episcopacy is bound by strict confidentiality. There is no way of providing an update other than to say the process is ongoing," said Deacon Chris Barrett, Media Representative of the Diocese of Pembroke. Deacon Barrett also serves as a Permanent Deacon at St. John Chrysostom Parish in Arnprior.

"There are no time restrictions. This process for selecting a new Bishop can be time consuming and take many months to complete."

Despite this, that is not to say our diocese is without leadership.

"On March 28, 2019, Bishop Michael Mulhall was appointed Archbishop of Kingston," said Deacon Barrett.

"He was installed as Archbishop of Kingston on May 3, 2019. That same day, Pope Francis appointed Archbishop Mulhall Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Pembroke. This means that Archbishop Mulhall is still our chief shepherd until the new Bishop is installed. The apostolic administrator has the authority to govern a diocese during the period of time

between Bishops. For example, in September 2019, Archbishop Mulhall announced clergy appointments affecting a number of priests and parishes in the Pembroke Diocese."

The selection of new Bishops begins on the level of those who are currently Bishops. A pool of candidates is presented to regional assemblies of Bishops, who review and vote on the priests whose names have been put forward.

Those names are then presented to the Apostolic Nuncio, an ecclesiastical diplomat of the Holy See. In Canada, Archbishop Luigi Bonazzi is the Apostolic Nuncio, a position he has held since December 2013. Archbishop Bonazzi will conduct his own review of the candidates, eventually submitting a recommendation to the Congregation of Bishops in Rome. This body is specifically tasked with the selection of new Bishops.

The members of the Congregation will also hold a vote on the candidates. The current head (prefect) of the Congregation is Cardinal Marc Armand Ouellet of Canada. It will be his responsibility to present the results to the Holy Father.

The Pope will then render a decision, notifying the Congregation of his choice, which, in turn, will notify the Apostolic Nuncio in Canada. It is the task of the Apostolic Nuncio to notify the candidate and confirm if he will accept the appointment.

Once the new Bishop is named, he will require the support of all members of the diocese in carrying out his duties within our faith community.

"Every Bishop has many responsibilities being the chief shepherd of a diocese," said Deacon Barrett.

"It is a substantial task, one that is impossible to manage without the spiritual support of his flock. All the faithful of the Diocese of Pembroke have been asked to pray for the future Bishop during this discernment period. Prayer cards have been distributed throughout the diocese requesting that this prayer is said until a new Bishop has been chosen."

## Prayer

*Heavenly Father, we ask in the name of your Son, that you bless our future Bishop. Provide him with the gifts he will need to carry on the ministry of Jesus in our diocese. Grant him the heart of your Son, the heart of the Good Shepherd. Bestow upon him the zeal of St. Paul in preaching the Good News; the humility of St. John Vianney in ministering the sacraments; the compassion of St. Vincent-de-Paul in serving those most in need; the wisdom of St. Augustine in teaching the doctrine of our Church; and the missionary fervour of St. Columbkille, our patron. Through Christ our Lord.*

*Amen*





# Archbishop Mulhall's Pastoral Letter

*Fourth Sunday of Lent*

*March 22, 2020*

My dear faithful of the Archdiocese of Kingston and the Diocese of Pembroke,

I am writing to you on the Fourth Sunday of Lent. Across each of our dioceses, the provinces, the country and the continent, Sunday Mass has been celebrated in private by our pastors. This Sunday has been a unique experience as we feel the absence of a Sunday Mass together. Many other ordinary activities in our communities have been cancelled while citizens are being asked to remain at home as much as possible. There is a growing realization that this state of affairs could continue for some time.

With this letter, I wish to ask for your fervent prayers for those in every branch and aspect of health care. The vocation of health care has always been dear to the Church's ministry and these individuals will be asked to generously give of themselves for the care of those expected to be infected with the virus. Let us also pray for those in public office and for those in positions of authority in religious houses, homes, institutions, parishes and dioceses as they struggle with many challenges including the health and financial care of all. These are unprecedented times in our lives, and we pray that the Lord's wisdom be abundantly granted.

The speed with which these events have developed has been breathtaking. Perhaps the most disturbing and disquieting aspect of this past week has been the sense of uncertainty and insecurity which has been created. Faced with the prospect of living in such uncertainty for some time, we each experience the anxiety of the unknown. Knowing that no simple answers are available, it is vital that we ask the Lord

to grant the grace to heal this anxiety with a true sense of consolation. Let us first be thankful to the Lord for His continued blessings and never cease to give Him proper praise. And let us pray for the grace to place our absolute confidence in the providence and care of the Lord. We know in faith that He wishes us to receive His abundant gifts. We also know that it is difficult to accept such gifts unless we humble ourselves in His presence. I warmly invite you to pray with me the psalm given to us this week in the Sunday liturgy, the well-known and well-loved Psalm 23.

What a paradoxical gift it is that we are confronted with this reality in the very heart of Lent! This season of grace provides a blessed opportunity both to experience our utter dependence upon the Lord, in addition to forming a true religious sentiment of petition. Let this sentiment of petition be strong and pure. Let it be the petition of the people of Nineveh so beautifully upheld by the Lord in the Gospels. With such a grace there can be no room for division. Let our communion be strong, our charity constant, and our humility a fragrant offering to the Lord.

The cancellation of our public Easter celebrations is hard to imagine; yet, it is a provision which is very likely to take place. Our Holy Father has provided guidelines and assistance for the living of our faith in these days. The Bishops of Ontario will continue to assist one another, and the Archdiocese/Diocese will provide guidelines in the coming days and weeks for the faith life, as well as the financial concerns for our parishes.

My dear faithful, please know of my blessings and prayers in these difficult days.

**+Michael Mulhall**  
**Archbishop of Kingston**  
**Apostolic Administrator of Pembroke**

## Psalm 23 (NRSV)

*The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.*

*He makes me lie down in green pastures;  
he leads me beside still waters;*

*he restores my soul.*

*He leads me in right paths*

*for his name's sake.*

*Even though I walk through the darkest valley,*

*I fear no evil;*

*for you are with me;*

*your rod and your staff—*

*they comfort me.*

*You prepare a table before me*

*in the presence of my enemies;*

*you anoint my head with oil;*

*my cup overflows.*

*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me*

*all the days of my life,*

*and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord*

*my whole life long.*

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## Ecclesia





## The end of an era: Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse closes

On the banks of the majestic Ottawa River, lies a stately brick and mortar dwelling for the Sisters of St. Joseph Congregation in Pembroke. The Motherhouse is closed with its future unknown. What is known is what the home has meant to many people, both the religious and the community.

It was Bishop Patrick Thomas Ryan of Pembroke who initially petitioned the Sisters of St. Joseph to establish a presence in the diocese. It was his desire to see that Catholic education was made available to all youth who followed our faith. The very first Sisters would arrive in 1910, establishing a school in Douglas, followed by Killaloe and Mount St. Patrick. In 1921 the Sisters began their lasting presence in our community, housed in a farmhouse that existed on the property. The Motherhouse was initially built in 1953, with additions made in 1962 and 1967. It has been a home to many involved in providing a Catholic education to the young in Renfrew County. Added to that mission was caring for the health care and spiritual needs of the surrounding rural community and beyond. The Sisters were influential in seeing to the needs of the poor, orphaned children, the frail and elderly as well as youth who were facing challenges. A large group of Lay Associates from around the Ottawa Valley have made a commitment to continue to live the spirit of the Sisters and do good work where they can.

Within the rooms and hallways of the Motherhouse many devoted Sisters have spent their lives dedicated to mission work outside of Renfrew County and Canada. The Motherhouse in Pembroke was a holy refuge for those Sisters who tirelessly provided daily support to the Peruvian community and was a welcome home for those international religious.

Along with international work the Sisters were often dispatched to remote areas where resources were few. Many Sisters taught in local areas including Pembroke, Petawawa, Chalk River, Deep River, Barry's Bay, Douglas, Killaloe, Renfrew, Campbell's Bay, Sheenboro, Chapeau, Shawville, Vinton and Quyon, providing a vital service and access to a valuable religious education. Many had full careers with the Renfrew County Catholic School Board, including Sisters Margaret and Lucy.

Some of the Sisters chose the healthcare field as their ministry. They administered in hospitals in Barrhead, Alberta and Barry's Bay, and in long-term care homes in Regina, Saskatchewan and Campbell's Bay, Quebec. The Sisters were also instrumental in

opening a hospital and a nursing home in Radville, Saskatchewan. Many nurses and administrative Sisters served in those locations with love and compassion for many years. Farther afield the Sisters helped establish the mission in Chinchá Alta, Peru, administering to the needs of the poorest of the poor in that region. This mission still exists today with the help of many generous donors.

For many, the Motherhouse was the first home away from home, with many Sisters leaving their family homes for the first time and entering the Convent.

"When we entered the Community we left our own homes, our parents and our siblings. This became our home," said Sister Margaret Blake, a native of Pembroke. She has served with the Sisters of St. Joseph since 1961.

Slowly and consistently the Sisters have found new homes in which to reside. With an aging community and challenging call to the religious, those who have called the Motherhouse their home remain thoughtful and grateful for its glory days. At one point, 100 Sisters resided at the Motherhouse where they were tasked with the daily coordination of duties necessary to run any home. More importantly, it was here where they would gather to worship, pray and celebrate their gratitude to God.

As Sister Lucy Germain explained, the Motherhouse was more than a residence.

"We came together for celebrations. We came together for meetings. We would come here for retreats. No matter where we were, this was our home base, always", said Sister Lucy.

Those gatherings were all the more vital given that members at any time could be assigned to a mission that would take them away from the Motherhouse.

As the doors close to the Motherhouse many will not know that the Sisters opened their infirmary to some local residents and priests who were welcomed and attended to with full care, including a spiritual surrounding. At one point the Sisters also shared their heated indoor pool to many seeking the warmth of a therapeutic pool. This generous offering made a difference in the quality of life for many who had physical ailments that were bettered with the use of the pool. In recent years, the ever-increasing insurance liability rules and regulations did not make it feasible to keep the pool open to the general public.



Sister Margaret Blake and Sister Lucy Germain.

The Chapel within the Motherhouse also welcomed regular community Catholic members who shared the celebration of Mass on a regular basis.

For those who have had the privilege of visiting the Motherhouse, it is the profound silence and peace that is a quiet reminder of who and what this building has housed—religious who remain focused on prayer and relationship with God. As Sister Lucy said, "We prayed together. We always had Eucharist together. We also had morning and evening prayer together. That helped me to stay closer not only to God, but also to our own community."

As Sister Margaret commented "Prayer is the mainstay of our very being. Otherwise, what would we be without prayer? It kept us grounded."

The beautiful memories that the Motherhouse has provided are enhanced greatly by its surroundings. The expansive backdrop and access to the Ottawa River will be a sight the Sisters will miss. With the four seasons in the Ottawa Valley, the building and its mature trees and flowers are a majestic tribute to the contributions the Sisters have made within the community and beyond.

The Pembroke community remains home for those Sisters who are the last to leave the Motherhouse as they have found alternate local accommodations in various residences. With the building still seeking a new owner its future remains uncertain. What is certain is if the walls of the Motherhouse could speak they would tell the story of many religious living a communal life focused on the prayer and works of God. That life will continue.





## 50th Anniversary to the Priesthood: Reverend Joseph Francis O'Malley

**R**everend Joseph Francis O'Malley celebrated his 50th Anniversary of Ordination to the Priesthood of Jesus Christ on May 2. He wished to begin this article with the motto that was chosen for his class of 1970 taken from St. John's Gospel Chapter 15, verse 16: "It was not you who chose me, it is I who have chosen you." And from the Book of Jeremiah, Chapter 1, verse 5: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations."

Fr. Joe entered St. Augustine's College in Scarborough, Ontario, in 1963 to study philosophy and completed his studies in Theology at St. Augustine's Seminary in preparation for his ordination by Bishop William J. Smith at Our Lady of Mercy Church in Bancroft.

As a transitory Deacon in 1969/70, he served in Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Renfrew, St. John Chrysostom Parish in Arnprior and in Transfiguration Parish in Etobicoke while completing his studies.

"My greatest love, as a priest, is found in the Celebration of the Sacraments, and especially the Eucharist and to help people grow in their faith and through the difficulties that life has thrown at them. Over the years, I have celebrated thousands of Masses and I have heard hundreds of confessions, celebrated many Baptisms, Marriages and anointed many who were ill while serving in active ministry. In my priesthood I have had to deal with many, many tragedies and then having to bear the news to parents and families while supporting police officers in their

role. Support your priests. Like all emergency support workers, your priests often suffer silently, but with the support of the Lord. The sincerity and seriousness that all of you have for your faith will continue to inspire me, and I am thankful for your witness," shared Fr. Joe.

After his ordination to the Priesthood, Fr. Joe served his first summer in his home Parish of Our Lady of Mercy in Bancroft and Haliburton. In September of 1970 he was appointed to serve at St. Columbkille Cathedral in Pembroke. On the death of Fr. Gerry Cooper in 1971, Father became responsible for the then well known Teen Project Involvement Team. Large numbers of teens were attracted to faith gatherings, Masses, and discussions on various topics, as well as other Diocesan youth group leadership sessions. During this time, Fr. Joe also had the blessed opportunity to accompany a group of young people to hear Mother Teresa (now St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta) speak in Toronto at Massey Hall in 1972 on invitation of the Archdiocese of Toronto. He still retains a photo of all attendees.

Fr. Joe was appointed as assistant at St. James' Parish in Eganville in September 1977 and shortly thereafter (November) was appointed Administrator of Holy Rosary Parish in Griffith and St. Joseph's in Esmonde. In September 1984 he was appointed Parish Priest in Braeside. While stationed in Braeside he was given the task of working with the parishioners of Our Lady of Perpetual Help to build a new church, hall, and house while helping to build and deepen their faith life by involving national and international speakers.

Father was transferred from Braeside in 1994 to St. Lawrence O'Toole Parish in Barry's Bay (his place of Baptism). He remained there until his appointment in 1999 to Our Lady of Sorrows Parish in Petawawa. While at Sorrows, Fr. Joe was privileged to introduce many adult, family and youth programs. After spending 13 years in service of the people in Petawawa he decided to retire in 2012.

Fr. Joe is spending his final years reminiscing of his many years of service to the young and not-so-young people in this Diocese of Pembroke while praying for its renewal and a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon it.

"I wish to thank and pray for all those who have made a deep and lasting impression on me throughout my 50 years of priesthood, in particular my parents and family, the many priests and religious sisters, the secretaries, catechists, the youth ministers, the choirs, the young people (now not so young) and the many adults in various parishes and those whom they



and I accompanied to various Youth, Young Adult and Adult Conferences in Canada and to various places in the United States. The Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio, where I attended conferences for various ages and in particular the yearly priest's retreats was close to my heart for 40 years. The Holy Land visits were my prize! I have had the great privilege of bringing to our Diocese many national and international charismatic speakers. May God reward all of you greatly for your kindness to me and to many others! I realize also, that I may have failed, disappointed and let down others, which I regret and I ask your pardon."

"To any young person reading this blurb, let me tell you that there is no greater vocation in life than to respond to and to be faithful to the call of the Lord Jesus Christ and to His people in the Priesthood or Religious Life. Take your thoughts and plans to God in prayer; you might be surprised as to what he has in store for you. If instead you should choose the Single Life or the Sacrament of Marriage, either one must also be lived out faithfully. May God help you to make a wise choice in this confusing world!"

"Printing space is limited and I could fill many columns if I elaborated on my 50 years of Priesthood and so, to every person reading this article, I challenge you to change the atmosphere in our parishes, communities and our world, and not just the climate, by daily living out your vocation in order to proclaim the call of the Lord to you in the Scripture passages that I have quoted above: 'It was not you who chose me, it is I who have chosen you. I have appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last'."

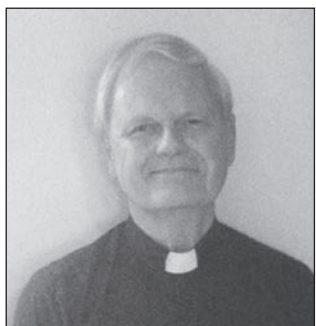
"Last of all, may every one of us support and work with our new Bishop in rebuilding the Church in this great Diocese of Pembroke under the direction and guidance of the Holy Spirit. God has great plans in store! Let us be open to them! God Bless!"







## 30th Anniversary: Deacon Robert Probert



**T**his June 15 will mark the 30 anniversary of the ordination of Deacon Bob Probert to the Diaconate. In the five years since he was last profiled, Deacon Probert continues to make himself available to our Christian family in the diocese.

"I go where I am sent or invited to serve," said Deacon Probert.

"Every day is unique and full of mystery. My God-given faith in Christ's presence with me carries me forward."

As Catherine Doherty received from the Lord and passed on to us in the Little Mandate of Madonna House: 'Go without fear into the depths of men's hearts, I shall be with you.'

One particular duty he made mention of was visiting the ill and dying at St. Francis Memorial Hospital in Barry's Bay.

"In the last few years, the Lord has led me to serve the sick and dying at our local hospital and hospice," said Deacon Probert.

"Receiving ongoing education and training in palliative care seminars and workshops is very helpful for the times when I am asked to visit elderly, sick and dying brothers and sisters in our area. I am very grateful to God for the gift of listening to them and receiving love from them, walking with them on their journey."

Deacon Probert is also active with Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College in Barry's Bay.

"As a director on the board and an adjunct professor, I am happy to serve the chaplains, Father Blair Bernard of Madonna House and Father Joseph Hattie OMI, as well as the staff and faculty in their work of caring for the spiritual and intellectual formation of the students," said Deacon Probert.

He was also privileged to serve as a deacon during a mass at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

"This happened during our pilgrimage to the Holy Land, which we (wife Mary Lois) made during Lent in 2019 to celebrate and give thanks for 50 years of marriage," said Deacon Probert.

"It was just as in the song, 'I rejoiced when they said to me, Let us go unto the House of the Lord, Standing there, O Jerusalem, in your gates unto the House of the Lord.' It was a rich experience to follow in the steps of Jesus and to meet the people of the Holy Land, especially our suffering Catholic brothers and sisters of the West Bank – we will never forget it."

At home, Deacon Probert told of his passion for the Liturgy of the Hours.

"One of the promises a deacon makes at his ordination is to maintain and deepen a spirit of prayer and to celebrate faithfully the Liturgy of the Hours for the church and the people of the whole world," said Deacon Probert.

"Even before I was ordained, my wife was praying the Liturgy of the Hours, and taught me to chant the hours with her. And as I promised to the Archbishop, I have, with Mary Lois, 'maintained and deepened a spirit of prayer' as we celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours together daily. This is a great source of unity, grace, and joy in our home, and helps us to be faithful to prayer. We find that starting and ending our days with these prayers along with the Rosary strengthens our Sacrament of Matrimony, and our love for God's people and His Church."

Father Pawel Ratajczak of St. Hedwig's Parish told of the vital role Deacon Probert plays at the church.

"Deacon Bob is a faithful supporter for the 5 pm Saturday Vigil Mass," said Father Ratajczak.

"He arrives from Combermere, no matter the weather, and helps to set up for Mass, serving as deacon during the Eucharist. He has a cheerful disposition and is an active member of Saint Hedwig's parish. The sick and the homebound are close to his heart."

### To Whom Shall We Go?

John 6:68



### Madonna House Summer Program 2020 for Young Adults July 4 — August 8

**Week 1 July 4 - 10 We are Pilgrims in the World**

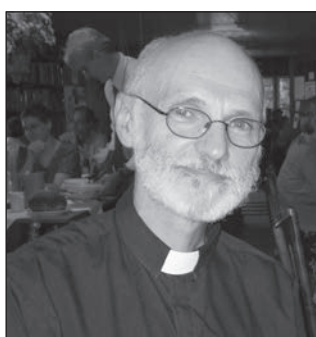
**Week 2 July 11 - 17 I was Lonely . . . Rejected**

**Week 3 July 18 - 24 Finding Security Only in Christ**

**Week 4 July 25 - 31 Trusting with the Heart of a Child**

**Week 5 August 1 - 8 Through the Hands of Our Lady**

[www.madonnahouse.org/programsguests](http://www.madonnahouse.org/programsguests)



## 25th Anniversary: Father Robert Johnson

Fr. Robert Johnson was ordained on August 4, 1995.





## 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 is publishing a series of introductory articles on these priests for our readers to learn about.*

*In this edition, Father Pawel Ratajczak agreed to tell our readers a little bit about himself.*

**B**orn in Bialystok, Poland, Father Ratajczak was raised in Warsaw, Poland. Unlike other priests from overseas who have been featured in the *Ecclesia*, Father Ratajczak arrived in Canada as a child when his family moved to Canada as political refugees in 1986. They first settled in Vernon, British Columbia, then Toronto and eventually settled in Mississauga.

“I was an altar server for a short time, and then was very involved in youth groups at St. Maximilian Kolbe parish in Mississauga,” said Father Ratajczak of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

Having briefly considered life in the priesthood at the age of 10, it wasn’t until he was attending the University of Waterloo that he truly felt God calling him to serve in the clergy. In preparation for his newfound path in service to God, Father Ratajczak returned to his native Poland with the Oblate order.

“The Oblates ran my home parish of St. Maximilian Kolbe; I was attracted to their vibrant faith, and the fact of doing mission and living as a community,” said Father Ratajczak in explaining his decision to join the Oblates.

“The novitiate year is basically a year of spiritual retreat, where a candidate prepares to take first vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. It is also a year of work, learning to live in community, and a little bit of study. I started my novitiate in the fall of 1999 and finished in the fall of 2000, which just happened to coincide with the Great Jubilee Year. The Oblate novitiate is located in a 1,000-year-old post-Benedictine monastery found on Holy Cross Mountain in the south-east of Poland.”

From there, he enrolled in Newman Theological College in Edmonton in the fall of 2000, then St. Paul’s Seminary in Ottawa. Amidst a snow storm, he was ordained into the priesthood on January 24, 2007, at his home parish of St. Maximilian Kolbe.

“First, for about a year, I was an associate pastor at St. Casimir’s Parish on Roncesvalles Avenue in Toronto,” said Father Ratajczak.

“Then, for just under four years, I worked as Director of the Catholic Youth Studio radio program (run by the Assumption Province of the Missionary Oblates at that time). Subsequently I was sent for further studies to Rome, where in four years I completed a license and then an ecclesiastical doctorate in theology, with a specialization in spirituality. After returning to Canada, I was assigned for a year as Associate Director at Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre in Mississauga. In September 2017 I was assigned as pastor at St. Hedwig’s.”

“I most enjoy seeing how involved people are with their Catholic faith, and how an active laity enlivens the life of the Church,” said Father Ratajczak on the satisfaction he acquires from serving as a parish priest.

He also serves as an instructor at Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College in Barry’s Bay.

“I’ve taught courses on States of Life, Christology and Trinity,” said Father Ratajczak.

“I do very much enjoy lecturing, and appreciate how teaching is a good way to learn.”

He also noted the contrast on living in the rural setting of the Ottawa Valley versus the urban sprawl of the Greater Toronto Area.

“I’m still coming to appreciate how different rural living is from city living, and how much, for example, the harsh winter weather is a factor here,” said Father Ratajczak.





## Pembroke Diocesan Catholic Women's League News

By Bev Drouin, Diocesan Communications Chair

**T**he Pembroke Diocesan Council of the Catholic Women's League of Canada elected a new council to carry the organization into the 2020s. President Joan Lemay assembled the council at St. Columbkille Cathedral to plan the upcoming year's meetings.

"Care for our Common Home" is the National theme. The National CWL has been undergoing some changes, one of which is the Core Values: Faith, Service, Social Justice. There is also a new Mission Statement: *The Catholic Women's League of Canada calls its members to grow in faith, and to witness to the love of God through ministry and service.*

The Diocesan annual Day of Reflection was held on Saturday, September 21, 2019, at St. John Chrysostom Parish in Arnprior. Carol Sulpher and Betty Ross gave a wonderful presentation on The Genius of Women. The Fall Meeting was held on Saturday, October 19, 2019, at St. Francis Xavier Parish Hall in Renfrew. The guest speaker was Anastasia Bowles, with Life Canada, who spoke on "Loneliness at End of Life", which fit perfectly with the provincial theme of loneliness. Pat Weller and Sheila Bielawski gave a presentation on "A world without plastic waste. Can we make it happen?" Attendees had their eyes opened that day!



Front row left to right: Nancy Guyea, Treasurer; Elaine Turner, President-elect; Joan Lemay, President; Donna Provost, Administrative Assistant. Back row, left to right: Bev Drouin, Communications, Newsletter Editor and Webmaster; Karen McKibbin, Resolutions and Legislation; Carmel Rumleskie, Past-President; Annette Chaplin, Christian Family Life; Sheila Bielawski, Education and Health; Margaret Maloney, Life Member Liaison; and Irene Perrault, Spiritual Development. Missing is Pat Weller, Community Life.

### The Feast of Saint Columbkille



Location:  
St. Columbkille Cathedral  
188 Renfrew St.  
Pembroke  
Time: 9:45 am  
Date:  
Tuesday, June 9, 2020

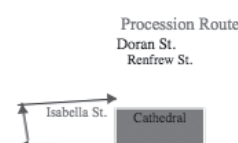
All are welcome to this special gathering as we join in prayer and thanksgiving to God for the Patron Saint of our Diocese.

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

### Procession for the Feast of Corpus Christi



Please join us for the 10:30 am Celebration of the Eucharist with Procession to follow with Hymns, Adoration and Final Benediction.



Sunday, June 14, 2020  
10:30 am – 12:30 pm  
at St. Columbkille's Cathedral  
188 Renfrew St., Pembroke, ON

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





## Parish Profile

### St. Alphonsus Parish, Chapeau

The devoted parishioners of St. Alphonsus parish in Chapeau are truly blessed to celebrate their faith within the confines of an architecturally stunning church in Chapeau, QC.

“What a joy it has been to celebrate the sacraments in what is arguably the most beautiful and magnificent church in the entire diocese,” said Father Moyle.

“To be able to offer the Eucharist surrounded by such impressive pieces of art and woodcraft gives me chills almost every time I celebrate a mass.”

A log chapel was originally established at Church Point near Paquette Rapids in 1839. However, it was October 1845 that the parish had its first parish priest in the form of Father James Christopher Lynch, who resided in the vestry portion of the church.

In May 1853, the island was engulfed by fire, destroying the chapel and leaving parishioners in dire straits. This calamity forced Father Lynch on a two-year mission to Lower Canada and the United States in the desperate quest to raise funds to re-establish a church. His efforts proved fruitful, returning with ample donations to construct a new church in Chapeau in 1857. Father Lynch would remain at the parish until his death on May 16, 1885.

Father Dosithée Leduc, previously of Pembroke, succeeded Father Lynch on May 25, 1885. He would oversee the construction of the current stone church, blessed and dedicated to St. Alphonsus on December 12, 1888. A brick rectory was built beside the church in 1894. Like his predecessor, he remained at the parish

until his passing in 1907. The remains of both Fathers, Leduc and Lynch, are interned beneath the chancel of the church.

Fast forward to 2020 and the descendants of the brave souls who endured the adversities of pioneer life continue to flock to the parish to celebrate their faith.

“Chapeau is fortunate in the level of support it receives from parishioners which helps the parish to remain financially self-sufficient,” said Father Moyle.

“A large part of the reason for this success has been the proceeds from our annual parish supper held at the end of September each year which helps to pay our annual heating bill. We also cooperate with other community organizations on other fundraising projects, most recently with the presentation by the Stone Fence Players production of ‘Up At Fred’s’, a musical about Fred Meilleur, a local legendary hotelier and barkeep who owned the now-defunct Chapeau Hotel. These larger events are supplemented with various draws throughout the year. Suffice it to say that anyone serving as pastor on the Quebec side of the Ottawa River needs to always be open to new and varied activities to help pay all the bills!”

Father Moyle has a very special connection to the parish, having served as parish priest for several terms.

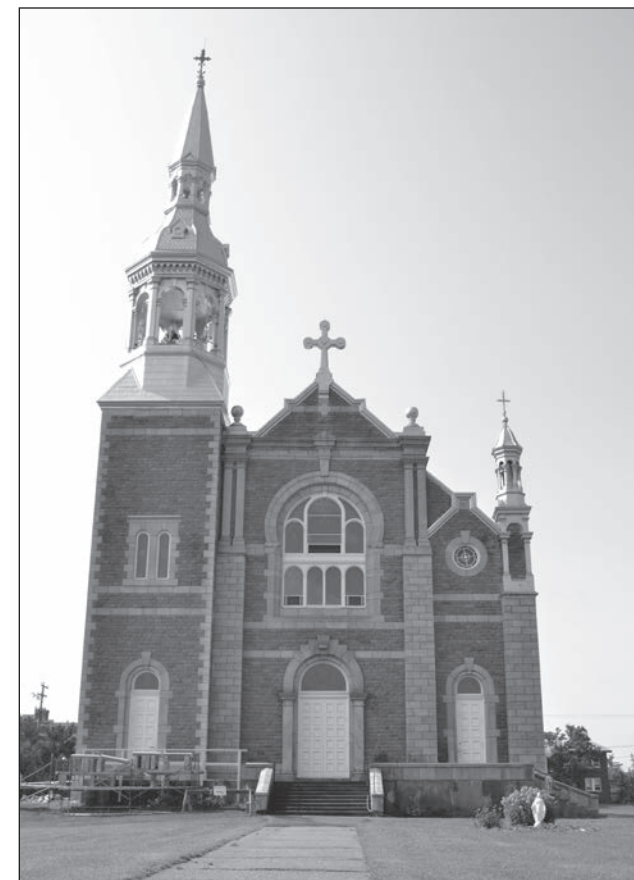
“This is my third appointment serving as a priest in St. Alphonsus,” explained Father Moyle.

“I served with Father Alfie Harrington in the mid-1990s as the parish assistant. Back then, Chapeau had three mission churches: Notre Dame du Lac in Desjardinsville, Holy Spirit Church in Nichabeau, and Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Waltham. After a five-year stint as pastor in Otter Lake and Lac Cayamant, I returned to replace him as Pastor. After one term, Bishop Smith sent me to Mattawa where I served for seven years before Bishop Mulhall brought me back to Chapeau when I switched assignments with Father Mitch Beachey. Taken together I’ve served the parishioners in Chapeau for just over 16 years.”

In the last two decades, the parish has seen its share of renovations.

“St. Alphonsus Church has undergone a significant number of renovations over the past 20 years,” said Father Moyle.

“With excellent support from the Quebec Government, we have repaired the roof, replaced the entire electrical system, as well as restored and repaired the incredible woodwork and paintings that decorate the church’s interior. Additionally, all of the stained-glass windows



have been cleaned and re-leaded and reinstalled. Next year, again with the assistance of the provincial government, we will be repairing the interior plaster as well as the large doors at the church’s entrance. Aside from all of this, we have built a new office attached to the west side of the building which allowed us to once again serve parishioners in the village—something that had ceased with the closing of the rectory in 2005—as well as facilitated the installation of a handicap entrance equipped with a wheelchair lift, an addition that finally made the building accessible to everyone. This last change was done with the support of our local Federal Member of Parliament who helped us obtain a grant for the project.”

For Father Moyle, his extended time at the parish has provided him a unique opportunity to oversee various sacraments to more than one generation of parishioners.

“What an awesome privilege it has been to be able to have offered the sacraments into the second and third generations of some families,” said Father Moyle.

“Children that I baptized and subsequently married are now bringing their children to the church to receive their sacraments. This opportunity truly brings home how it is that a parish priest truly becomes a ‘father’ to his community. I have also watched the community wax and wane through various events both good and bad and have had, as a result, the chance to minister God’s mercy and love through them not just as the local priest, but as a fellow long-time resident.”

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







## Saint Profile

### Saint Casimir, King, 1458–1484

**Feast Day: March 4**

**Patron Saint of: Poland, Lithuania and also young people**

Throughout the world every year on March 4, the Catholic Church honours a very special Saint—Saint Casimir.

Casimir Jagiellon was born in 1458, he was the third of 12 children born to Poland's King Casimir IV and his wife Elizabeth of Austria. Although he was of royalty he had an aversion to the lavish lifestyle. He and many of his brothers studied under John Dlugosz who, with his deep faith and political knowledge, had a great influence on Casimir's education. Casimir strived not to draw attention to himself, he always wore plain clothes and he would often sleep on the ground. Casimir would often spend his night in deep prayer and the meditation on the suffering of Christ. This led Casimir to greater love for God and the caring of his people, especially the poor.

He was known to be a man of integrity, courage and compassion, a man who understood people's pain. Casimir always urged his father, the King, to practise justice throughout his kingdom and when governing his people. If anything in the country had been overlooked because of simple neglect he was quick to point it out to the King. At the age of 13 his father the King was asked by the people of Hungary to offer his son as their new king. Casimir was enthusiastic about helping them in their protection from the people of Turkey. However this plan failed and Casimir had to return to Poland.

Upon his return Casimir returned to his studies with John Dlugosz. Casimir also sought the Lord's guidance to be shaped more in His image. He would often at night kneel before the doors of Churches even though the doors were locked and immerse himself in great prayer no matter the hour or the weather. He always had a great love for the Lord and a special devotion to our Blessed Mother. In the year 1479, his father left Poland to attend business in Lithuania, leaving Prince Casimir in charge of the monarchy until 1483.

Many advisers to the Prince tried to encourage Casimir to find a suitable person with whom to enter into the Sacrament of Marriage, even his father tried to arrange a marriage with the daughter of Frederick III, Emperor of Germany. Prince Casimir made it quite clear that he preferred the single life with his focus on God and striving to ensure justice for the people placed in his care. He continued to dedicate himself to live a life of celibacy.

After a time of illness Prince Casimir was diagnosed with tuberculosis and knowing his death was approaching he prepared himself for his journey home with a greater devotion to God. Prince Casimir died on route to Lithuania at the court of Grodno, on March 4, 1484 at the age of 26. He was buried in the Chapel of the Blessed Virgin in the Cathedral at Vilna (now Vilnius, Lithuania) with a Marian Hymn of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, with whom he often recited, "Omnie die dic Maria mea laudes anima". Pope Adrian VI canonized him in 1522. When, in 1604, his tomb was opened for translation to the church that Sigismund III built in his name, his body was found to be fresh and whole. He was holding this prayer to the Virgin in his hands.

On the five-hundredth anniversary of the death of Saint Casimir, March 5 1984, Saint John Paul II made this address to the Lithuanian people who had come to Rome to commemorate this Saint. He said "Centuries ago, the Church proclaimed Casimir a Saint and placed him before us not only to be venerated, but also that we might imitate his heroic virtues and follow his example of holiness. His witness of great faith and fervent piety continues to have special meaning for us today. To the young he offers a challenging call.

His life of purity and prayer beckons you to practise your faith with courage and zeal, to reject the deceptive attractions of modern permissive society, and to live your convictions with fearless confidence and joy. His life also shows us the importance of the Christian family. For Casimir was one of twelve children, and from his earliest years he learned that each child is a unique gift from God and that a home built on the love of God is truly a pearl of great price.

Men and women religious can find in Saint Casimir an inspiration for their consecrated lives, as they recall how he embraced a life of celibacy, submitted himself humbly to God's will in all things, devoted himself with tender love to the Blessed Virgin Mary and developed a fervent practice of adoring Christ present in the Blessed Sacrament. To all he was a shining example of poverty and of sacrificial love for the poor and needy."

In our diocese, we are so proud to have Saint Casimir Parish in Round Lake, which was built in 1928. Over the years so many of the faithful have gathered together to worship, celebrate the Sacraments and ask St. Casimir to hear their prayers and to intercede for them.

With that same faith let us continue to pray to Saint Casimir to intercede for us, praying the following prayer:



**Novena Prayer to St. Casimir:**

*May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, and all the Saints intercede with God for us. The Lord hath made His Saints wonderful. And heard them when they cried unto Him.*

**LET US PRAY**

*Preserve us, we beseech Thee, O Lord, from all dangers to soul and body, and by the intercession of the Blessed and Glorious Mary ever Virgin, Mother of God, of St. Joseph, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, of St. Casimir and all the Saints, in Thy mercy, grant us health and peace, that after all adversity and error is removed, Thy Church may serve Thee in freedom and safety, through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the union of the Holy Spirit world without end. Amen.*

*St. Casimir pray for us.  
(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be, (3 times))*





## Beatification of Léonie Martin: Conclusion of the diocesan phase

By Fr. Olivier Ruffray, submitted by Sister Catherine Toner

*The cause of beatification of Sister Françoise-Thérèse, Léonie Martin, Visitandine—sister of Thérèse de Lisieux—was closed on Saturday, February 22, 2020, during vespers, at 4 p.m. in the chapel of the Visitation of Caen.*

*Bishop Boulanger then brought to Rome, to the Congregation of Saints, the voluminous dossier of the remarkable study carried out by the Historical Commission under the leadership of Father Pascal Marie, explains Father Olivier Ruffray in the article below that was published on the website of the Diocese of Bayeux-Lisieux.*

Since 2014, the process of beatification and canonization was initiated by the Sisters of the Visitation of Caen who have taken on the « Actor of the Cause » of their sister Françoise-Thérèse, who became « Servant of God, » on December 18, 2014.

### Long-term work

Five years have passed since the official opening of the trial on January 24, 2015, the day of the feast of St. Francis of Sales. For the study of the case, Bishop Boulanger appointed an ecclesiastical court with Father Michel Marie as promoter of justice. Our bishop appointed, under the responsibility of Father Pascal Marie, a historical commission charged with collecting all information, written documents and objects relating to the « Servant of God ».

In the meantime, Father Sangalli, postulator of the Cause, worked as a team to exhume the remains of Léonie (a step required during such a process), and to place it in a new tomb in the renovated chapel of the Visitation of Caen.



Celine and Leonie Martin (Therese's sisters) with their cousins Jeanne and Marie Guerin, and Tom, the family dog.



### From Caen to Rome

The closing of the trial in our diocese was officially sealed on Saturday, February 22, 2020, during Vespers, at 4 p.m. in the Chapel of the Visitation. Then Bishop Boulanger will bring to Rome, to the Congregation of Saints, the voluminous dossier of the remarkable study carried out by the Historical Commission under the leadership of Father Pascal Marie, so that the virtues of the « Servant of God » may be studied. If the Roman investigation is positive, Léonie will be declared « Venerable ».

The next two steps are beatification and canonization. For each, a miracle must be found. Doctors answer the question: « In the current state of science, can we explain this healing? » Theologians add: « Is it the intercession of the servant of God that allowed this healing? » Their respective conclusions then allow the Pope to decree the beatification and then, when the day comes, the canonization...

Regarding « the Servant of God, Sister Françoise Thérèse », several graces are being studied. Let us continue to ask Léonie to intercede with Jesus for the causes that we will entrust to his prayer.

### Léonie's contemporary relevance

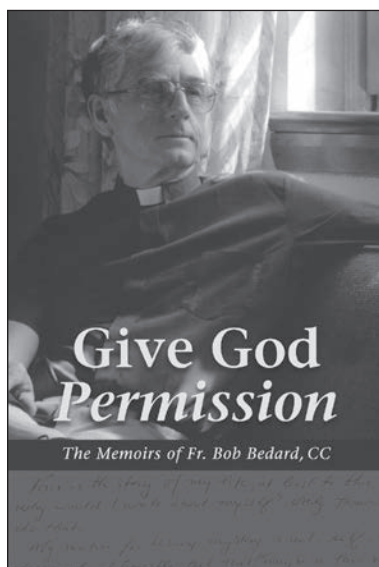
At the monastery of Caen, Léonie already had a reputation for holiness. Fragile throughout her life, Léonie has long attracted the most fragile people who have a great deal of trust in her. By her fragility, she is accessible to the smallest and simplest who find help and comfort near her. To date, thousands of Internet users from 155 countries on five continents have logged on to the Visitation website. *Comme un signe qui tisse sa toile !*





## Three short book reviews

By Fr. Michael Smith



**Bedard, Fr. Bob, C.C.**  
***Give God Permission:***  
***The Memoirs of Fr. Bob Bedard, C.C.***  
**Ottawa: Companions of the Cross, 2010**

Fr. Bob Bedard (1929-2011) was for many years a teacher and later principal at St. Pius X High School in Ottawa. He went on to become pastor of St. Mary's Parish and then founder of the Companions of the Cross, a community of priests and seminarians.

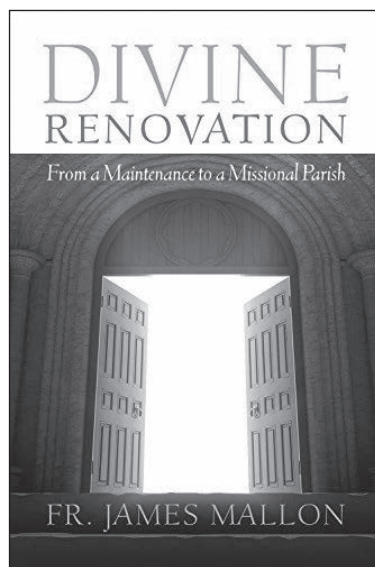
Full disclosure: I knew Fr. Bob personally, although not well. I was a guest in his home for a weekend in December 2003.

In this book, Fr. Bedard tells the story of how the Holy Spirit gradually got through to him and led him on paths that he would never have imagined.

The main point that Fr. Bedard is putting across by recounting his life story can be summarized as follows: God's will is the only thing worth doing. In order to make us want to do his will, God changes our hearts. We need to give God permission to take over in our lives and our parishes. When we give God permission, God does surprising and wonderful things. This comes at the price of suffering, however. We become "companions of the Cross".

The book is a joy to read, and I found it personally inspiring. Fr. Bedard has the gift of expressing profound truths in simple, concrete language. As a bonus, his self-deprecating humour is delightful.

My only criticism is that the book could have used more editing. A couple of sections are off-topic.



**Mallon, Fr. James.**  
***Divine Renovation: From a Maintenance***  
***to a Missional Parish.***  
**Novalis, 2014.**

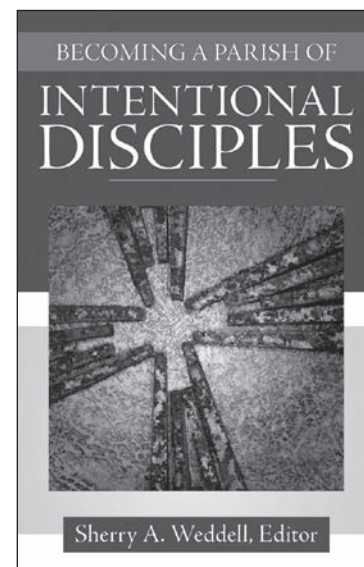
The author writes out of the conviction that every baptized person must be what Pope Francis calls a "missionary disciple" (cf. *Evangelii gaudium*). Consequently, every parish exists not only to serve its active members, and not only to bring back fallen-away Catholics, but also to reach out to those who are beyond its visible boundaries: to introduce people to Jesus and to give them the Good News.

To do this, argues the author, there must be a change in parish culture. Parishioners need to come to an experience of the Holy Spirit. Fr. Mallon promotes the Alpha program as a means to this end, but there are other means. Secondly, the author urges that pastors rely on a team of lay leaders, that pastors form them and entrust responsibility to them, always within a context of accountability. Thirdly, he recommends that great care be given to the weekend Masses, especially to the preaching and the music, and to an overall welcoming atmosphere in the parish.

This book has many strengths. The author has a passion for the Lord. He has a sharp theological mind, and he is a marvellous writer.

One drawback is that many of the author's practical suggestions would be more applicable to a big city mega-parish than to the smaller communities to be found in this diocese. Still, there are some helpful suggestions, such as the idea of opening up the RCIA talks to everyone. This is already being done in some places.

The book is a worthwhile read. For those of us in leadership in the Church, it provokes a healthy examination of conscience.



**Weddell, Sherry A., ed.**  
***Becoming a Parish of Intentional Disciples.***  
**Our Sunday Visitor, 2015.**

Even if one were to read only the first chapter in this anthology, it would be worth buying the book. The chapter is called, "The Generation of Saints." Sherry Weddell writes of how a few dozen people, from the late 1500s to the mid-1600s, helped transform the Church in Western Europe from a situation of corruption and despondency to one of renewal. They were truly converted to the Lord, they spread this holy fire, and they gathered people together to renew the life of the Church in every aspect.

Weddell's message is obvious: a similar transformation is possible today, with the Holy Spirit taking the initiative. Those who cooperate with the Holy Spirit need not be numerous. What counts is that we become what Weddell calls "intentional disciples": people who have met the Lord, and who set about deliberately on a path of discipleship.

The rest of the book is a set of case studies of parish renewal. No two stories of renewal are identical, but they have one characteristic in common: intentional disciples gather together to support one another, and they promote intentional discipleship among their fellow parishioners.

I highly recommend this book.





## Pilgrimage is a constant theme in Sacred Scripture

By Father Peter Do

Throughout Scripture, God invites people to embark on journeys. He invited Abram to journey from the Ur of the Chaldeans to the promised land. He invited the three Magi to follow the star of God's Son. God continues to invite us on journeys in our age, as in every age. Pilgrimages maintain their popularity and their relevance in our age because they correspond to fundamental desires of the human heart: to worship God and to be purified.



We see this at work especially in one of the most important pilgrimages that God invited his people to make—the Exodus. The Israelites were enslaved to the Egyptians. When the Pharaoh would not allow the Israelites to offer sacrifice to God in the desert, God led his people out of Egypt. Because they were found to be “a people who err in heart” (Ps 94:10), they spent forty years wandering the desert to be purified and to be made ready to enter into the promised land. And so we see that there are two basic purposes to the Exodus: the proper worship of God and the purification of the people.

These two fundamental purposes of the Exodus are also the purposes of pilgrimages in our own day. Pilgrimages are always made to worship God at some holy site. Of course, worship in our age does not usually require us to go far. We are not required to go to holy cities. In the time of Christ, the Jews had to go to Jerusalem to worship at the temple in order to offer to God fitting sacrifice. But now we live in an age where we can worship God anywhere in “spirit and truth” (Jn 4:23). We can simply go to our local parish and worship God there. Objectively, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass has the same value if it's offered by the Pope in St Peter's Basilica, or if it's offered by a simple priest in a country parish. Objectively, it really doesn't matter if we assist at a Mass in Rome or in Renfrew: it is the very same sacrifice of Christ on Calvary that is being made present again upon the altar. And yet pilgrimages to holy sites remain popular because it matters to us. Subjectively, it matters to us how much effort and how much sacrifice we put into our worship. It matters to us if we simply go to our local parish to offer sacrifice to God, or if we travel long and far to offer that same sacrifice.

The other main purpose of pilgrimages is purification. A pilgrimage has many hardships and inconveniences, both great and small. These hardships help us to purify ourselves. In fact, whenever we willingly accept suffering as being part of God's providence, this suffering helps us to purify ourselves. The hardships that we experience on pilgrimages in our day are usually small compared to our other sufferings and to the hardships our forefathers would have experienced on pilgrimages. We have to deal with sore feet and blisters, with rain and with poor cell reception. And yet, even these small hardships can help us to purify ourselves, and in purifying ourselves, we become more fit to enter into the Holy of Holies and worship God.

Because they correspond to these two fundamental desires, of worshipping God and of purifying ourselves, pilgrimages have continued to be popular to this day. Of course, the way that we go on pilgrimages has evolved. Today, most of us travel by plane or by car to go to pilgrimage sites, and yet walking pilgrimages are growing in popularity. Throughout the world, people walk long distances, sometimes hundreds of kilometres, to go to holy places like Rome or Santiago de Compostela. But you don't have to go that far for a walking pilgrimage. For the past couple of years, we have been organizing a walking pilgrimage in the last week of July from Our Lady of Fatima in Renfrew to St Ann's in Cormac. Walking about 75 kilometres over the course of three days, hundreds have made the journey to worship God at the shrine in Cormac. Perhaps God is calling you to make this pilgrimage? Perhaps, as God called Abram to journey to the promised land, as he called the Israelites out of Egypt, as he called the three Magi to worship his Son, perhaps he is calling you to make this journey. If you wish to know more or to register, please visit: <https://walktheopeongoline.org/>

Photo Credit: Dennis Corrigan

**WALK THE OPEONGO**

**TO ST. ANN'S SHRINE**

**July 23-26, 2020**

Join pilgrims from ages 7-77 in this life changing, 4-day journey from Our Lady of Fatima, Renfrew to St. Ann's Shrine, Cormac.

**For more information and to register visit: [walktheopeongoline.org](https://walktheopeongoline.org)**

Walk, pray, sing, and camp (i.e., pilgrimage) your way to St. Ann's!

### 82<sup>nd</sup> Annual Pilgrimage at the Shrine of St. Ann in Cormac

This year's Triduum Masses will take place on Thursday, July 23, Friday, July 24, and Saturday, July 25, at 7 pm.

The final day of the pilgrimage, Sunday, July 26, will feature an 11 am outdoor Mass of healing at the Shrine. There will be no 2 pm Mass.

Guest celebrant will be Reverend Basil Tanguay, with the theme “We walk by Faith”

*Religious articles for sale*

*Priests available for sacrament of reconciliation in the morning*

*Food and refreshments will be available*





## Northern Ontario Catholic Youth Conference – unCHAINED

Early Saturday morning on February 29, a handful of youth, along with Fr. Justin Bertrand and Yvette Bourque, Director of the Family Life and Youth Ministry Office, set out for the Northern Ontario Catholic Youth Conference held in North Bay. This one-day event, hosted by the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, featured Ontario-born speaker/musician Chris Bray.

The conference is a joint initiative by the Diocesan Youth and Young Adult Office and the Vocations Office of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie. It began as a means for all the youth of the Northern Ontario dioceses to take part, since distance and expense normally prevent them from attending conferences in larger cities. This initiative was spearheaded by Fr. Daniele Muscolini, pastor of Holy Name of Jesus and St. Alphonsus Liguori Parishes, Diocesan Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry in the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie.

The purpose of the small-scale trek was to scout out the conference with some youth to see if this was something in which the diocese would like to participate on a larger scale in the future. The conference was held from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and was packed with opportunities to meet other youth, participate in games, hear youth testimonies, talks, crazy antics, music, meals, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and confession. The presence of Bishop Marcel Damphousse was a welcome addition as well as the Sisters of St. Joseph who sponsored the lunch, the Knights of Columbus who sponsored the dinner and the Sisters of Mary Immaculate who joined in on the fun and mingled with the youth for the day.

Everyone enjoyed the conference immensely. It was unanimous by all who attended that there would be a bus from Pembroke Diocese to attend next year, God willing.







## Bringing the saints alive: Seat of Wisdom performs “The Song of Bernadette”

By Maria Reilander

Students of Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College moved audiences in a realistic and thought-provoking rendition of *The Song of Bernadette* this past February 7–9. The annual play by the College’s Don Bosco Drama Club drew in an audience from across Ontario and as far as Wisconsin, USA. “I found the drama of it very satisfying, and the content edifying,” said one audience member. “It was my favourite Seat of Wisdom play that I have seen. Well done!” Another said that it inspired a deeper appreciation for Saint Bernadette and a rediscovery of the devotion to Our Lady of Lourdes.

The play is adapted by Jean and Walter Kerr from Franz Werfel’s novel of the same name. It follows the story of Saint Bernadette Soubirous, her family, and the local townsfolk as they individually and collectively encounter the apparitions of Our Lady of Lourdes. These apparitions took place in 1858 in the southwest of France and have since inspired international devotion to Our Lady.

The production featured Gabriela Jezierska (Kingsville, ON) as the innocent and faith-filled Saint Bernadette Soubirous, with a supporting cast of over twenty fellow students. The audience roared with laughter as characters like the cured blind man, Louis Bouriette, (played by Conrad Sibiga – Breslau, ON) and Bernadette’s aunt, Bernarde Casterot, (Frances Westin – Cayman Islands) took the stage and brought to life the townsfolk of Lourdes and Bernadette’s family. Lucy Gay (Ottawa) gave a touching dramatization of severe Mother Vazous’ gradual conversion and change of heart toward Bernadette, and a heart-wrenching performance by Maria Anastasia Corkery (Keene, ON) and Dominik Jezierski (Kingsville, ON) as Bernadette’s parents, Louise and Francois, brought tears to eyes of many.

When asked about her focus in directing this production, director Marissa Henry (class of 2006) commented, “I hope the audience will see just how normal Bernadette was...I’d like to see the audience be able to relate to the characters on stage – real historical people – and see themselves.” Brenna Wehrle (class of 2019), the production’s stage manager, echoed this sentiment, saying “too often we think of saints as different than us or somehow disconnected from our reality – especially when they experienced supernatural things, like apparitions or miracles.” Audience member Katrina Hamon attested to this sentiment and the accomplishment of the focus saying, “I believe the story could have happened... I feel like I would be like one of the people who followed the higher opinions of the priest or the mayor.”



Fr. Stephen Helferty, parochial vicar at Our Lady of Lourdes attended the show: “The hard work and talent of so many Seat of Wisdom students and community members came together to create something excellent in *The Song of Bernadette*. One of our blessings in the Church is to possess the best stories, and the story of Our Lady appearing to Bernadette at Lourdes is one of them. As a member of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, naturally I did not want to miss this show. It turned out to be a worthy retelling of the story which reminded me of Our Mother’s generous solicitude, and the beauty—like that of a *song*—of a life lived wholly for God.”

The Don Bosco Drama Club of Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College would like to thank all from around the diocese who came out to enjoy the show and encounter the experiences of St. Bernadette of Lourdes.

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 four-year Bachelor of Arts degrees in Philosophy, History, Literature and Classical and Early Christian Studies. 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.







## Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) program at St. Hedwig Church in Barry's Bay has a 'grassroots' beginning—two moms who wanted the program for their children.

Jenna Craine, mother of five, was immediately drawn to Catechesis of the Good Shepherd for her own children when she read first about it, but it seemed like too lofty a goal to accomplish by herself.

"Then one day, I was having coffee with a friend and fellow mom from our parish, and she said she was longing to have this program for her children. We decided to ask the pastor and were met with great support and encouragement. I approached Maria Reilander soon after and she was very eager to be involved, and has since taken on a vital leadership role," shared Craine.

They began training in Ottawa that summer and launched the program in November of 2018, right before Advent.

From the initial discussion about bringing CGS to their parish (winter 2018), to training (July 2018), to launch of the program (November 2018) took about 8 months.

"It was a wonder to see how Our Lord, the Good Shepherd, worked through the generosity of many to bring this program to fruition so quickly," commented Reilander.

### Why Catechesis of the Good Shepherd?

CGS offers a unique approach to catechesis in many ways, but one of the most important distinctions is that its leaders don't see themselves as teachers, but rather as guides.

"This is because we believe that each child already has a unique relationship with God, and we are there merely to facilitate and enhance that," explained Craine.

"We do this by using child-sized materials that actively engage their five senses in prayer. So, when we read the Scripture passage about the Visitation, they have beautiful figures of Our Lady and St. Elizabeth to act out what they heard."

Leaders respect even the youngest child's ability to understand and absorb points of faith, reading them actual Scripture, instead of children's Bibles and giving them beautiful materials to engage with, lots of art supplies to create with, and allowing lots of room for quiet.

"So much of our lives are filled with noise and technology—both adults and children—that compete with the still, small voice of God. But in the atrium, we step back from such hyper-stimulation and give the children time to dwell in quiet. This is the seeds of real prayer for them," noted Craine.



Our Atrium at St. Hedwig's, which is located in the basement of the parish rectory.

### What is the atrium?

The word "atrium" comes from the early Church, where before entering the sanctuary, people would gather in a place called the atrium to wash their hands and feet to prepare themselves to be at Mass.

The CGS atrium is a special place that helps prepare the child's soul to engage more fully in the Mass.

"Everything in the atrium is designed for small children—the furniture, the materials, the art supplies—and in ours much of it was made lovingly by the catechists or members of the community," stated Craine.

Participants gather weekly on Saturday afternoons for two hours. New material relating to the Scripture, parts of the Mass, or the liturgical year is presented, and after that, the children are free to work with what they like.

"The method draws on the approach of Maria Montessori, so we have various 'works' such as pouring, scooping, folding, all which the children love, and all which help to build their concentration and dexterity, so we can introduce them to increasingly more detailed works. For instance, they begin by pouring beans, then water, and eventually are able to prepare a model chalice with real red wine," said Craine.

A beloved work for many of the children is a model altar.

"It is very small—a bit larger than a bread box—but it has lovely real candles, a tiny chalice and paten, and a snuffer to extinguish the candles. They learn the language of the Church simply by arranging this work, and it is truly touching to watch them do so with such simple reverence and joy," shared Craine.

The reaction in the community has been incredibly positive! The program received generous financial support from the parish, the Sacred Heart League, and the local Knights of Columbus, as well as assistance



Jenna Craine and I at our Catechesis of the Good Shepherd training for Level 1 (ages 3-6).

from members of the parish and Madonna House in gathering and creating materials.

Since it began last year with eight children, the program has doubled, and has more families interested than it can currently accommodate.

"Such growth is a huge encouragement," said Craine.

The feedback of parents and children in the program also shows how this ministry is filling a vital need.

"We believe that by inviting the children into this welcoming space designed for them, we show them that the Church is a place where they belong. Hopefully that message will stay with them, even as time goes on and the world throws various distractions and temptations at them," said Craine.

"We introduce them to Jesus the Good Shepherd and emphasize how He calls *each* of them by name; this is a beautiful message they can return to for the rest of their lives. To witness young children come closer to Christ is an amazing privilege, to experience their precious joy and enthusiasm inspires our own faith. It's absolutely worth the investment of time and effort both for the catechist and the parish."

"I absolutely love being a catechist and that it is a wonderful opportunity to grow in one's faith and facilitate a child's personal encounter with Our Lord. I recommend others to look into being catechists!" said Reilander.

CGS is a three-level program: level 1 (ages 3-6), level 2 (ages 6-9), and level 3 (ages 9-12). At the St. Hedwig's atrium they offer level 1.

If anyone would like to learn more about the program or see the Atrium, Jenna and Maria would be happy to speak with them. They would love to see the program offered to more children in our diocese.

Additional information is available at Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Association of Canada: <http://www.cgsac.ca/> and of the U.S.: <https://www.cgsusa.org/>





## Diocese of Pembroke—Parish Suppers 2020/Soupers paroissiaux

**St. Columbkille Cathedral no longer having a supper (as of 2020)**

**Sunday, May 24**

**Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Braeside, ON**

*Barbecued chicken*

2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Adults \$15.00

Children under 12, \$5.00, under 6 free

Take-out available

Air conditioned hall

**Sunday, June 14**

**St. Francis Xavier, Renfrew, ON**

*Hot roast beef dinner, fresh home baking*

2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Adults \$15.00, Children 12 & under \$5.00,

Children under 5 free

Take out & delivery available (613-432-5825)

**Sunday, July 12**

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

*2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Old Fashioned "Roaring 20s" Parish Picnic*

12 noon to 4:00 pm

*Something for everyone. Children's bouncy castle, races, games*

*Live entertainment (bring your lawn chair, and stay for the afternoon)*

*Fresh items hot off the grill for purchase*

*Games of chance, 50/50 draw, raffle of amazing themed baskets*

**Sunday, August 2**

**St. Martin of Tours, Whitney, ON**

*Annual Turkey, Ham & Baked Bean Supper.*

*Country-style home cooking*

*Take-out meals available. Games for*

*all the family. Article Bingo. Raffle tickets. Canteen*

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

Adults: \$15.00; Children 5-10: \$5.00;

Under 4: Free

**Sunday, August 9**

**St. Andrew's, Killaloe, ON**

*Supper & Bazaar*

*Turkey, ham, stuffed pork, baked beans,*

*Salads, rolls, pies and desserts*

*Entertainment, bingo, garage sale, raffles*

Adults: \$15.00; Children 4-12: \$5.00;

Children under 4 free

1:30 – 6:00 p.m.

**Sunday, August 16**

**Our Lady of Grace, Westmeath, ON**

*Turkey Lunch & Supper*

*Bake/Sale Tables, Bingo, Draw Tickets,*

*Grab bags. Air Conditioned – Take-out available –*

*Wheelchair accessible*

*Westmeath Community Centre*

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

Four & under: Free

12 p.m. – 6 p.m.

**Sunday, August 16**

**St. Hedwig Parish, Barry's Bay, ON**

*Turkey dinner*

Adults \$14.00; Children 3-12 \$6.00; under 2 free

2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

**Sunday, August 30**

**Our Lady of the Angels, Brudenell, ON**

*Turkey, Ham & Baked Beans*

*Live entertainment, bingo, country market*

Adults: \$15.00; Children 3 to 12: \$6.00;

Children under 2: free

Served from 2:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Visitors' Mass at 1:00 p.m.

**Sunday, September 6**

**St. Mary's, Wilno, ON**

*Chicken Supper*

*Home-Cooked Meal*

*Plates served from 1 p.m.*

*Take-out available*

*Visitors' Mass 12 noon*

*Elevator/Wheelchair accessible*

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

**Sunday, September 6**

**St. Ignatius Martyr Parish, Maynooth, ON**

*Annual Supper and Bazaar*

*Turkey, ham, beans, mashed potatoes, gravy and vegetables*

*Homemade pies and squares*

*Raffle, wheel, fish pond, Nevada tickets and Bingo*

*Shop the craft table for crafts, preserves and baked goods, etc. Something for everyone!*

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

Children under 5: free

12 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Parishioners and Fr. Malachy Ekezie extend

a warm welcome to all!

**Sunday, September 13**

**Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Lapasse, ON**

*Turkey and ham dinner*

*Mt. Carmel Hall*

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

Children under 4: free

2:30 p.m. – 6 p.m.

**Sunday, September 13**

**Our Lady of Mercy, Bancroft, ON**

*Roast Beef, Homemade Salads,*

*Baked beans and Pies*

*Raffle Tickets, Silent Auction, CWL Curiosity Shoppe*

*Take-out meals available*

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

Children 5 and under: Free

12:00 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Mass at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Advance dinner tickets \$13.00

**Sunday, September 20**

**St. Jean Baptiste, Pembroke**

*Turkey & ham dinner*

*Take out available*

*Handicapped accessible*

*11:30 a.m. – 7 p.m.*

Adults: \$15.00, Children: \$5.00

**Le 20 septembre**

**Paroisse St-Jean-Baptiste, Pembroke, ON**

*Le souper à la dinde et jambon.*

*Des repas pour apporter (take out) sont disponibles au 303 rue James et la salle est accessible aux handicapé(e)s.*

*adultes: 15,00 \$ / enfants 5 \$*

*11h30 – 19h00*

**Sunday, September 27**

**St. Patrick Parish Supper, Mount St. Patrick**

*Turkey, ham, beans*

*12:30 p.m. – 6 p.m.*

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

**Sunday, October 18**

**St. John Chrysostom, Arnprior, ON**

*Harvest Festival – Roast Beef Dinner*

Adults: \$15; Children under 12: \$8; under 6 free

Dinner 12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Parish Hall (285 Albert St.)

**Sunday, November 1**

**St. Matthew the Apostle, Madawaska, ON**

*Annual Turkey, Ham & Bean*

*Supper – Raffle Tickets*

*Community Hall, Madawaska*

*12 noon – 6 p.m.*

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

Three & under: Free