

JULY-AUGUST 2021

NORTHERN LIGHT

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF
GROUARD-MCLENNAN



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NORTHERN LIGHT



The official magazine of the Archdiocese of
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NEWS BULLETIN

Message for graduates

His Grace Archbishop Pettipas offered a message of congratulations and hope for all young people graduating from Catholic and public schools throughout the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan this year.

"Know that even as your life reaches out to other circles, those who have supported you in childhood and adolescence continue to cherish you for who you are and who God calls you to be," Pettipas said in the video message. "I pray for God's continued blessing on your graduation day, as well as in your future endeavours."

The full video messages in English and French can be viewed at facebook.com/ArchGrouardMcLennan



Pope to meet with Indigenous coalition

The CCCB has announced a delegation of Indigenous Canadians will meet with Pope Francis to "foster meaningful encounters of dialogue and healing."

The delegation is scheduled to take place in Rome from **December 17-20 2021**, in compliance with international travel guidelines.

The full CCCB announcement can be read at www.archgm.ca.

Fort Vermillion Catholic school demolished

A virtual ceremony to commemorate the demolition of **St. Mary's Elementary School in Fort Vermillion** was held on **June 2**, with a special message from Archbishop Gerard Pettipas.

The school, which was heavily damaged by the Fort Vermillion flood of 2020, will be rebuilt beside Fort Vermillion Public School.



NEWS BULLETIN

Lifting of Mass restrictions

*Please note the following changes in Mass protocols, some of which will be reviewed again at the end of **August, 2021**:*

For now, **the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass continues**. There is **no capacity limit** and hospitality after Mass can take place. **Masks are no longer required**, but if mask bylaws and other COVID-19 restrictions remain in place in your parish's municipality, then these restrictions should remain in place until the local bylaws are lifted. Some parishioners may feel more comfortable wearing a mask, and they may continue to do so.

Preregistration for Mass and contact tracing no longer needs to take place, though hand sanitizing stations and sanitizing protocols after Mass are recommended to continue. **If parishioners do have COVID symptoms, they should still self-isolate and follow Alberta Health Services directives.**



St. Bernard's Church in Grouard forwarded us this picture of their first "maskless" Sunday Mass on July 4.

The celebration of Mass will look very similar to pre-pandemic times. **All parts of the Mass can be sung**. The sign of peace can resume as intended in the liturgy. For now, **the distribution of Holy Communion will continue under one species - the Body of Christ**. The distribution of **Holy Communion on the tongue is allowed**, but if contact is made with the Communicant, hands must be sanitized before continuing to distribute Communion.

While we can now comply with this increase in freedoms, it is still important we all remain safe and be considerate of one another. Open conversations, and the leadership and discretion that priests provide will help all parishioners in their return to parish life.

OUR ARCHDIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE RETURNS!

We are pleased to announce the return of our **Archdiocesan Pilgrimage in Girouxville** this summer, held from **August 13-15**.

With the lifting of restrictions, we are encouraging all who would like to attend the pilgrimage in person to come out!



Campgrounds will be available on site near **Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Girouxville**, but without electrical outlets or water/sewage facilities. There will be portable washrooms on site.

If many are not comfortable or able to join us in Girouxville, we are also **encouraging parishes to mirror some of the events** of the pilgrimage in their own church that same weekend. Our schedule includes **Adoration and Benediction** Friday evening, a **Vigil Mass and Candlelight Procession** on Saturday evening, a **healing service** on Sunday, and many, many other events.



Whether united with us in Girouxville or in your own local parish, we as an archdiocese will all come together - especially to celebrate **the Assumption of our Blessed Mother on Sunday, August 15**.

The official schedule for our pilgrimage can be viewed at archgm.ca/archdiocesan-pilgrimage/. View our promotional video at [Facebook.com/ArchGrouardMcLennan](https://www.facebook.com/ArchGrouardMcLennan).

We hope to see you all there!



ST JOSEPH'S PILGRIMAGE



**Celebrate the Year of St. Joseph with this
once-in-a-lifetime pilgrimage!**



**St. Joseph's Church in
Spirit River**



**St. Joseph's Church in
John D'or Prairie**



**St. Joseph's Church in
Grande Prairie**

More details at www.archgm.ca

Water to the fire

Peace River pastor saves local parish from arson attempt

Fr. Nel Esguerra had to put his years of firefighter training to the test to protect his parish from an attempted arson. But, he believes the miraculous intervention of God is the real reason his church is still standing.

It was around 11 p.m. on Saturday, July 3rd, that Archbishop Gerard Pettipas and Fr. Nel awoke to the blaring ring of the Our Lady of Peace Church's fire alarm. The archbishop happened to be spending the night in Peace River, as he had plans to install Fr. Chukwudi Jieme as the new pastor in Grimshaw the next morning.

As the alarm rang through the rectory, both the archbishop and Fr. Nel looked around the building to see any signs of a fire. Because there had been a funeral at the parish that morning, Fr. Nel initially expected that incense had been left burning in the sacristy and this had triggered the alarm.

But as soon as the priest opened the door leading from the rectory to the sacristy, large clouds of black smoke began billowing out of it.

"Then I said, 'Oh... this is not good,'" Fr. Nel recalled.

The priest rushed forward to find out where this long trail of smoke was coming from. He peeked through the door that leads into the parish hall, and there he saw two flames near the main entrance. One flame was just starting to develop, but the other flame was already taller than him, and swiftly growing.

Instantly, Esguerra put his nearly ten years of volunteer firefighting experience to work. He rushed back to the kitchen to fill a pail of water and then got a garden hose. As he rushed around to begin extinguishing the two flames, he noticed that the window to the main entrance had been smashed in. Not only that, a third flame was also rising from the church basement.



Our Lady of Peace Church in Peace River



Fr. Nel Esguerra, pastor for Our Lady of Peace Church

When Fr. Nel finally made his way downstairs to put out that third flame, he found at the bottom of the steps what appeared to be a bottle filled with gasoline and a burning rag at its end. This type of homemade bomb is commonly referred to as a "Molotov cocktail".

Fr. Nel was able to extinguish the flame in time, preventing the bottle from exploding.

"My theory is the bottle was thrown in, hard enough that it smashed through the window and landed first on the carpet, and then it eventually rolled down the stairs causing the flame in the basement," said Esguerra.

"If it had landed directly into the basement I think it would have exploded on the spot. If it did, it would not have taken long for that fire to spread and do a lot of very serious damage to this church."

"It is a miracle that that Molotov cocktail never exploded. I consider it an act of God," said Fr. Nel.

By the time Esguerra got out of the church the fire department and RCMP were just showing up. While the flames were now extinguished, the church was still filled with smoke. The fire department proceeded to help clear the church of smoke and investigate the area for any other fires or hazards.

Thanks to Fr. Nel's courageous efforts, the damage to the church was limited. A section of carpet and walls are burned and damaged, and the smell of smoke still lingers in the church.



The fire damage at the top of the stairs, both the carpet and wall has been charred.



Further damage from the fire.

But the parish was spared the damage seen in many other churches across Canada recently. In the last week of June, six churches were burned down in British Columbia, and others were damaged by fires in the Northwest Territories and Nova Scotia. Each fire is being treated as suspicious.

In Alberta, the historic St. Jean Baptiste Church in Morinville was engulfed in flames and burned down on June 30. As the fire began to uncontrollably consume its walls and interiors, the 100-year old church with its towering bell tower crumbled to the ground.

As Fr. Nel valiantly put himself through billowing black smoke to extinguish the flames engulfing his parish, thoughts of the church in Morinville, and the ashes and rubble it was reduced to, were running through his mind.

"The one thing in my mind at that moment was Morinville. That church was a symbol of faith, a symbol of the community, and for that building to no longer be standing there is very demoralizing," said Esguerra. "And as I was putting out the fires, that was the one thing I kept thinking – I'm not going to let this symbol of faith and hope be taken away."

The fires come in the aftermath of news reports of unmarked graves found near former Indian Residential Schools across Canada, most of which were run by Catholic religious orders. The stories have sparked a tremendous backlash against the Church, including accusations of genocide. However, a full investigation on these graves has yet to be completed.



St. Jean Baptiste Church in Morinville, which stood for over a century, has now been reduced to rubble.

In 2015, Dr. Scott Hamilton from the Department of Anthropology at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario, was asked by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to complete an in-depth study and report on the deaths of residential school students and of burials on school grounds.¹ His 44-page report states that communicable diseases were a primary cause of death during the 19th and 20th centuries, such as tuberculosis and the Spanish Flu. The often poor, crowded and out-of-the-way conditions of the residential schools would have increased the spread of these diseases and the lack of resources to combat them.

The Department of Indian Affairs that established the Indian Residential School system had no formal or written policy on the burial of children, nor funding for it. With limited resources to send bodies to their home communities and to maintain graveyards at the school, Dr. Hamilton writes that typically cemeteries were established on school grounds and marked with wooden crosses. This was often seen as the only way of burying those who died at the schools, including students, teachers and religious.

Documentation of the existence of these gravesites goes back to 1907, though Hamilton's report states that by the 1940s deaths at the residential schools had become increasingly rare. While there was often little work done to maintain these cemeteries, and many went into total neglect after the closure of the schools, Hamilton's report found no direct evidence of a deliberate attempt to hide graves.

Since 2014, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission have called for efforts to identify the number of bodies buried at these gravesites, to restore them, and to work towards other efforts to honour the memory of those deceased there.

In our age of rapid information and social media, this issue has sparked and renewed tensions across Canada, for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, and for Catholics and non-Catholics alike. When Fr. Nel prepared for his homily on Sunday, July 4, he debated whether he should bring up the suspected arson attack on his church at all.



The discovery of 215 unmarked graves at the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School was the first of many recent discoveries of unmarked graves.

"I was worried that maybe I'll say something too political in the heat of the moment," he said. "But I thought – parishioners need to know what happened. And it's a teaching moment for me, to walk the talk and be an example of how we should react on such an occasion. So I just prayed to be guided by the Holy Spirit, to respond in a way that was not from a position of hatred or pointing fingers and making accusations, but in a way that stops this cycle of hatred and revenge. Because it needs to stop."

In his homily, Fr. Nel urged faithful to respond to such attacks on the Church with love, understanding and forgiveness. When we are faced with a damaging fire, we seek to put it out, not to stoke the flames and help it grow.



Fr. Nel's Sunday homily has left an emotional impact on many.

"We don't let the church be burnt with anger and revenge, but we heal it with compassion, kindness, forgiveness and reconciliation," Esguerra said in his homily. "The grace of God is sufficient. Therefore when we are weak, we know that our wounds and Christ's wounds are united. That those thorns within us and the thorns inflicted on Him are united."

"We always have the choice on how to react to these tragic events. Let us choose to be on the side of the grace of God, and the grace of God will always tell us to forgive, to love and to care. Let us remember there is a chance for us to be reconciled, to be healed. Let us move forward with the grace of God."

That homily, shared first as a livestreamed Mass on the parish's Facebook page, has now spread around social media, with many commenting on its power and emotional impact. Global News even contacted Esguerra and asked to use a part of the homily in their news broadcast.

Looking back, Fr. Nel says there is much more to be thankful for than upset about.

A piece of the wick from the Molotov cocktail that was thrown into the church.



The day after the fire, Fr. Nel and a group of parishioners got together to bless their church and pray to St. Joseph.

“It’s very sad to see the damage to this property, damage which could have cost lives. But people have shown so much support, and they have shown that they value their faith and they value this church,” he said. “People are volunteering to patrol the church, and even people from other communities are calling and asking if they can do anything to help.”

“Those gestures made me realize that there’s so much to be grateful for. It could have been much worse. And we were still able to celebrate Mass the next day.”

After the morning Mass on Sunday, some parishioners came back to the church at 3 p.m. to offer a prayer to St. Joseph. The priest and parishioners then went around the church seven times, blessing it with holy water and salt.

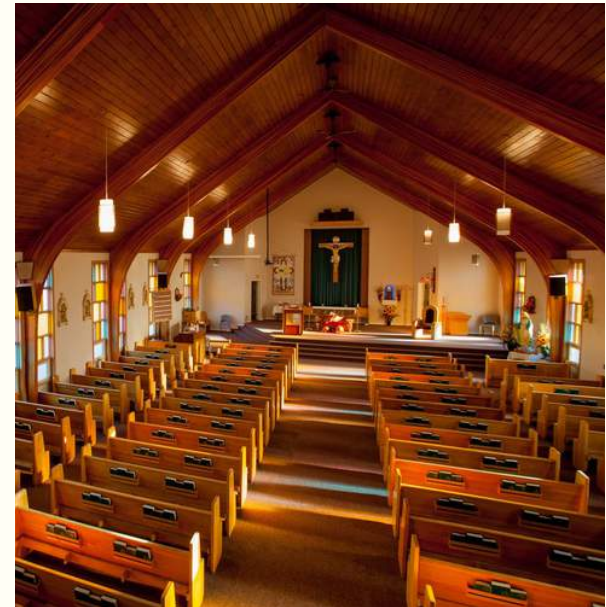
It is certainly a moment that has deeply affected Fr. Nel and the Catholic community of Peace River. While inspecting the church a few days after the fire, the priest found a small fragment of the rag that was used as a wick in the Molotov cocktail. He has kept it as a memento from the experience.

At a time when the world seems overwhelmed by negativity, by the wickedness of humanity, the sins of the Church and the divisions in society, the Peace River pastor hopes people will seek ways to heal pain, and not to inflict it further.

“There’s still a long way to go. It will be a long haul, but that’s the life of the Church. There’s up and downs, and this is one of those down moments,” said Fr. Nel. “We will always be imperfect people, and there will always be people in the Church who do imperfect things. But in moments like this we must learn above all to follow the golden rule.

"And that rule comes with a twist. It means not only to do unto others what we would like them to do to us. It also means when someone does something bad to you, you respond by doing the opposite.

“We must always be the people who put water on the fire, not those who want to see it burn further.”



Our Lady of Peace's main church was protected from any major fire damage.

Confirmations in Fox Lake



Father Andrew Simiiyu celebrated a multitude of first communions at **Little Flower Church in Fox Lake**, the weekend of **June 12-13**.

Congrats to all our young communicants!





Renovations in Chateh

Archbishop Gerard Pettipas and pastor **Rev. John Basiimwa**, FMH survey recent renovations to the **Our Lady of Assumption Church** in the northern reserve **Chateh**.

Trims and repairs were completed on the church's exterior siding, and some needed roof repairs were also done. Other renovations are underway for Father Bassimwa's rectory.





Meet Father Chukwudi

A short Q&A with our newest pastor

*As the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan's newest priest and the new pastor for our churches in Grimshaw, Whitelaw and Duncan First Nations, we asked **Rev. Chukwudi Jieme** some questions about his ministry and what he hopes to experience as a pastor in our archdiocese.*

Father Chukwudi joins our archdiocese from the Sons of Mary Mother of Mercy order of priests.



Tell us about your vocation and how you became drawn to the priesthood?

My late parents played a vital role in my interest and vocation to the priesthood. My parents were very devoted and active Catholics. They never missed Mass and would always take me along when going for Mass. Because of how the priests were celebrating Mass with great passion and devotion, on one occasion, I told my parents that I would like to become a priest so that I can celebrate Mass with the same passion and devotion as those priests. After my elementary school, I entered the junior seminary, and from there my journey to the priesthood began.

When and where were you ordained?

I was ordained a priest on July 22, 2017, in Mater Dei Cathedral Umuahia, Abia State, Nigeria, West Africa.

Tell us about your time as a priest in Africa.

Immediately after my priestly ordination in July 2017, I was made a Parish Priest of St. Jude Catholic Parish Ojieanya, Abakiliki Diocese, Ebonyi State, Nigeria, for a period of one year. In July 2018, I was sent to Canada for mission.



Father Chukwudi Jieme





When did you come to Canada? What communities did you minister to here?

I first came to Canada in 2014 as a seminarian. Immediately after my theological studies, I did some pastoral/missionary experience and an internship. In Canada, I have ministered to the Sagkeeng First Nation, St. Theresa Parish in Grand Marais Beach and Holy Redeemer Parish in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

What have you learned from your ministry in Canada?

From my ministries in Canada so far, I have learnt how to serve the people of God with humility, dedication, and selflessness.



How have you found your time in our archdiocese so far?

My time in the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan so far has been good and welcoming. The Archdiocese seems to be very organized with lots of policies. I am gradually settling down in Holy Family Parish in Grimshaw, trying to figure out how the parish operates and getting to know the parishioners by name and face.

Are there things you are looking forward to experiencing during your time here?

Within my ministry in the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan, I hope to deepen my priestly and pastoral experience.

What has been the greatest challenge of your priesthood?

My greatest challenge is when I have to experience racism from the people I have dedicated and sacrificed my life to serve. It is so painful.

What would you say is the greatest joy of your priesthood?

The greatest joy of my priesthood is celebrating the Sacraments with love and devotion.



Standing the test of time

Historic church in Friedenstal commemorates its 100th anniversary

The towering steeple of St. Boniface Church has stood high above the gravel roads and farmland of Friedenstal for over a century.

From its rugged exterior of deteriorating paint and wood, one may expect St. Boniface Church, which has been closed since the 1970s, to be worn out and decrepit. But stepping inside, its altars, statues, crosses, vestments and chandelier are well preserved and almost miraculously pristine – looking as if the church had only closed its doors that previous Sunday.

The church not only celebrates its centennial anniversary this year, June honours the church's patron saint – St. Boniface. His feast day was June 5.

Living just up the road from the historic church is Ed and Elizabeth Dechant. The couple have spent much of their life in Friedenstal. Ed's ancestors first settled there from Germany in 1916. His mother's side of the family fled to Canada from Russia in the 1920s, to escape communist persecution.



Ed and Elizabeth Dechant outside of St. Boniface Church in Friedenstal.

Even by the time his father arrived in 1916, Ed says Friedenstal was already well established. The area was settled by more than 50 different families, who were nearly all German Catholics.



The high altar at St. Boniface Church

“Pretty much every corner of the land somebody had taken,” he said. “People started coming here and surveying the land around 1909, and after that it just exploded. And the families didn’t travel much in those days; they pretty much stayed, hunted moose and were self-sufficient.”

Like much of the early Church in western Canada, the first priests to come to Friedenstal were Oblates of Mary Immaculate. The majority of St. Boniface’s priests came from Germany, and the parishioners were very insistent on having a German priest for their area.

They set up a small log church around 1913, with the permission of Bishop Emile Grouard, OMI. In 1920 construction began on their current St. Boniface Church. It was designed and built by Brother Eisemon, OMI.

The first Mass was celebrated on Christmas Eve, 1921 with its first pastor Fr. Wilhelm Ebert. Ed says every Mass was around 2 and half hours, as the sermon was preached in both English and German.

The church was blessed by Bishop Grouard on August 15, 1922.

Shortly afterward, the Sisters of Providence established a convent and boarding school that was attended by children from Friedenstal and outlying areas. Ed had never learned to speak any English until he began attending that school.

“When the nuns came, a new rectory was built and the nuns took over the old one as a convent,” said Ed.

“When I was a kid, the church was pretty active. They had a resident priest, and a younger priest that helped him. It’s the place where people would met. I went to school right next door, and got to know the kids who came that would stay at the dorms.”



The original log church in Friedenstal from 1913-1920.



A group of Sisters of Providence nuns in Friedenstal get ready to travel by horse.



LEFT: Elizabeth Dechant holds up a German-English Bible, one of many unique items still preserved at St. Boniface Church.



RIGHT: St. Boniface, the patron saint of Friedenstal's historic church. His feast day is June 5.

Elizabeth's most cherished memory of St. Boniface is the church choir. With a parish priest that was fond of the traditional music of the Church, there was great efforts to ensure the 30-person choir was up to the highest standard.

"One of our priests Father [Anthony] Herter just loved classical music," Elizabeth recalled. "They would sing all in Latin, and they arranged the singing in four different parts. It was quite a commotion. The choir had to be as good as possible."

The Corpus Christi feast was one of the parish's biggest celebrations. Parishioners would plant trees in honour of the feast day, and hold a procession through the whole community, with altars set up throughout the area.



Fr. Anthony Herter, OMI

In the winter time, a fire had to be started in the furnace of the church every Saturday evening to prepare for Sunday Mass and "get the chill out" of the building. Ed says that sometimes, depending on who started the fire, it would be pretty smoky in the church and you would be tempted to go outside during Mass to try and cool down.



Ed and Elizabeth Dechant inside St. Boniface Church, where its statues and altars are still in near-pristine condition.

In the 1950s some refurbishments were done on the church, replacing some of the original woodwork and repainting it. But no serious restoration work has been done on the church since that time. Fr. Martin Doll, OMI, was ordained a priest at the church on June 30, 1952.

When the railway was established along Fairview in the late 1920s, gradually all major resources began to centralize in that area. By the mid-1960s Friedenstal's school shut down, and then in 1969, St. Boniface Church's doors were closed. Locals then had to make the trip to Fairview for school and Sunday Mass.

At the time, Ed says opinion was split. The church was still very active, but with the closure of the school many expected that the church would be next.



Young people playing outside the boarding school that neighbored St. Boniface and was run by the Sisters of Providence

Today there are only about 25 families in the Friedenstal area. As Elizabeth says, now the farms are getting bigger, but the people are getting less.

Even if it has been closed for more than 50 years, St. Boniface Church is one part of Friedenstal that has stood the test of time.



St. Boniface Church

“For a 100-year-old church it’s in pretty good shape, but it needs some work,” said Ed.

One major issue is that the church was built without a solid foundation. When it was constructed in 1920, they used only big rocks and put timbers over them.

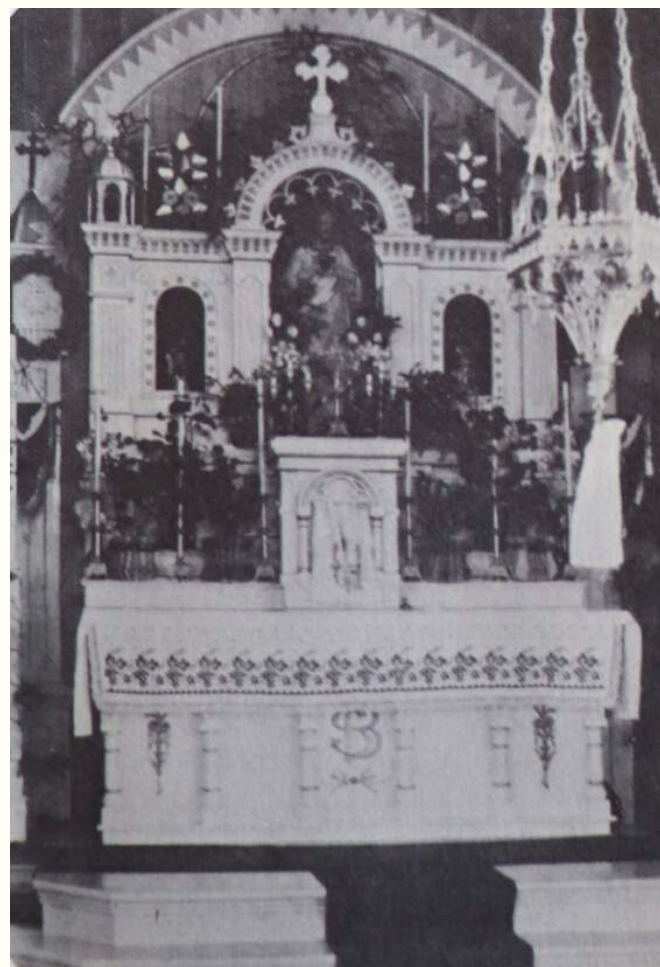
Now that the church has been designated as a historical site by the province, Ed and Elizabeth hope in the future it can get some needed restoration work on its foundation and exterior.

In May 1982, the Friedenstal Historical Society was established. They own and look after the property today.

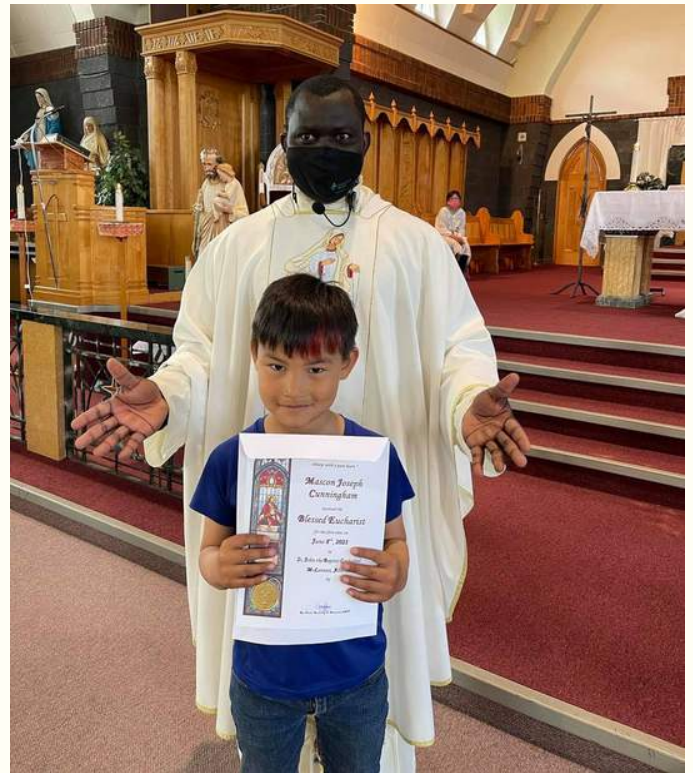
“Any government funding we would get for it we would have to match it locally,” said Ed. “With COVID a lot of fundraising we would normally do has been put on hold.

“The funding we need could get pretty major considering it needs a new foundation.”

Is there a piece of history in our archdiocese you'd like to see shared and retold? Reach out to the editor at comdirector.agm@outlook.com



The high altar at St. Boniface before its closure in 1969.



Confirmations in McLennan

Thirteen students from **Ecole Providence School** celebrated sacraments at **St. John the Baptist Cathedral in McLennan** on **June 8**, presided by **Rev. Eucharis Ndzefemiti, SDV**. Three students were baptized, eight students received their First Communion, and five celebrated the sacrament of reconciliation.

Congratulations to all our young faithful! Photos courtesy of Ecole Providence School.





Tree planting for our common home

The **Catholic Women's League** with **St. Mary's Church in Beaverlodge** planted five spruce trees outside the church this June, as part of the CWL's 2020 Centenary Project, **celebrating the League's 100-year anniversary**.

The project reflects not only the CWL's focus on "Care for Our Common Home", but also how their roots over the past century are now "branching out" into the next.





If you build it, they will come

High Level has big dreams of a new parish hall project

Priest and parishioners alike have big hopes for a new parish hall at Our Lady of Good Counsel in High Level.

Since Fr. Henry Kiggundi, FMH, arrived in High Level as parish priest four years ago, he felt a hall was one thing the church desperately needed.

“When I first got here I told the bishop – the only problem with this place is we don’t have a hall, and we will miss out on a lot without one,” said Kiggundi. “The church is a community. It is fellowship. But without a hall we don’t have as easy an ability to get together. Instead, you see people come for Mass and then leave right after.”



Fr. Henry Kiggundi looks over the plot of land where he hopes Our Lady of Good Counsel's parish hall will be built.

It was an idea of Father Kiggundi’s that slowly began percolating in 2018, but is now becoming a more tangible reality. Last autumn, the parish hall project took a major step forward when Our Lady of Good Counsel’s building committee hired an architect to make preliminary designs and a preliminary budget.

The project has now become much more than a hall, said Myles Bukowsky, chair of the parish’s finance committee and building committee. It would be an overall expansion of the church, including some much-needed storage space, offices, a kitchen, and an area for teaching catechism and sacramental preparation. The preliminary design shows the general layout of the kitchen, storage spaces, meeting rooms and the hall itself. Currently, the expected preliminary budget for the parish hall is \$3.5 million.



Myles Bukowsky shows some of the preliminary architectural designs for the parish hall project.

Now with a visual design on hand, Bukowsky and Kiggundi hope interest in the project will increase.

“Without a direct focus on the project, people will worry about other things,” said Kiggundi. “That’s why we needed to have a plan in place for the design and fundraising. Otherwise, it will always feel like it’s too big of a project for us to do, and there’ll be no way to get it off the ground.”

The hall for Our Lady of Good Counsel would provide new meeting spaces for the parish’s Knights of Columbus, Catholic Women’s League and El Shaddai group. As well, receptions for funerals or weddings could be held there.



When the building of the current church in High Level was approved in 1998, a parish hall was a part of its original blueprints. However, due to financial constraints, the hall was removed from the design when construction began.

Bukowsky agrees with Father Kiggundi that a hall is an essential part of parish life.

“When I lived in Lloydminster I was on the building committee there and we did a similar project,” recalled Bukowsky. “When that church’s hall was finally completed, it made a huge difference for the parish community.



Fr. Henry Kiggundi, FMH



Preliminary designs for the hall project

All of a sudden, the church was always busy and bustling. Every weekend someone rented out the hall for weddings, baptisms, sometimes for a certain saints’ feast day – any excuse for a gathering. High Level is a centre of activity for this region. This is the largest parish in [Deanery 5]. Once the hall is there, people will find a reason to use it.”

The church has done some fundraising for the hall through their weekly bulletin, where all proceeds from local business ads go directly to the hall project. It generates \$250 each week for the project. However, the parish is also focused on clearing up its debt, which must be done before any major fundraising on the hall can begin.



Myles Bukowsky

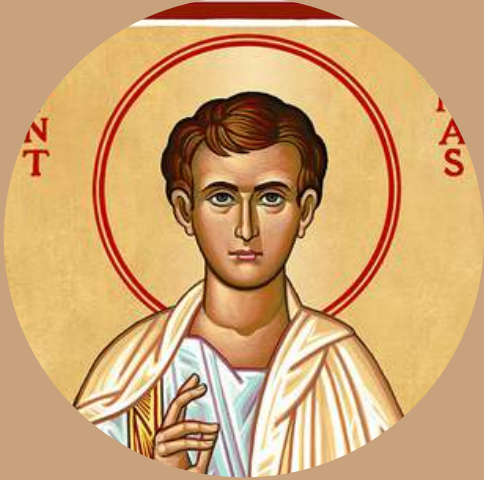
Along with the \$10,000 that was spent to create the preliminary designs, the parish has more than \$42,000 currently raised. The parish must have raised 60% of the project budget before construction can begin. While there is still a long way to go, the parish remains hopeful that the hall will one day be a reality. Though it may take some years and much perseverance.

“We’re just waiting for COVID to end and then we will be posting this two-page layout from the architect in the church and start using it for presentations,” said Bukowsky. “That’s the next phase. Once the COVID restrictions are fully lifted, we’re going to start looking towards events and fundraising.”

LITURGICAL NOTES

LITURGICAL NOTES FOR JULY AND AUGUST

Written by Archbishop
Gerard Pettipas, C.Ss.R



July 3: St. Thomas the Apostle, also known as “the doubting Thomas”, due to his refusal to believe in the resurrection of Jesus unless he can touch Jesus’ wounds. He later became a noted missionary, establishing the Christian Church in Persia and south-west India (Kerala). He was later martyred in Madras (Chennai). His tomb is in an altar at the shrine in his honour, found in the cathedral in Chennai.



July 15: St. Bonaventure was a Franciscan Friar Minor in the 13th century. He contributed greatly to the philosophical and theological debates concerning reason and faith. He became known as “the Seraphic Doctor”. He was elected the 13th Minister General of the Franciscan Friars Minor, and later made a bishop and cardinal.



July 22: St. Mary Magdalene was the most notable female disciple of Jesus Christ. She is mentioned 12 times in the four gospels, more than any other woman outside of Jesus’ family. Because she announced to the apostles that she had seen the risen Jesus on Easter morning, she is referred to as “the apostle to the apostles”. She is often confused with another Mary, a prostitute, also mentioned in the gospels.



July 26: Sts. Anne and Joachim, parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary. As parents of Mary, mother of Jesus, they were the grandparents of Jesus. St. Anne is the co-patron of the Province of Quebec, with a shrine in her honour at Ste-Anne de Beaupre, north east of Quebec City. St. Anne is also honored at Lac Ste. Anne, north west of Edmonton, home of the largest annual pilgrimage of Indigenous peoples in North America.

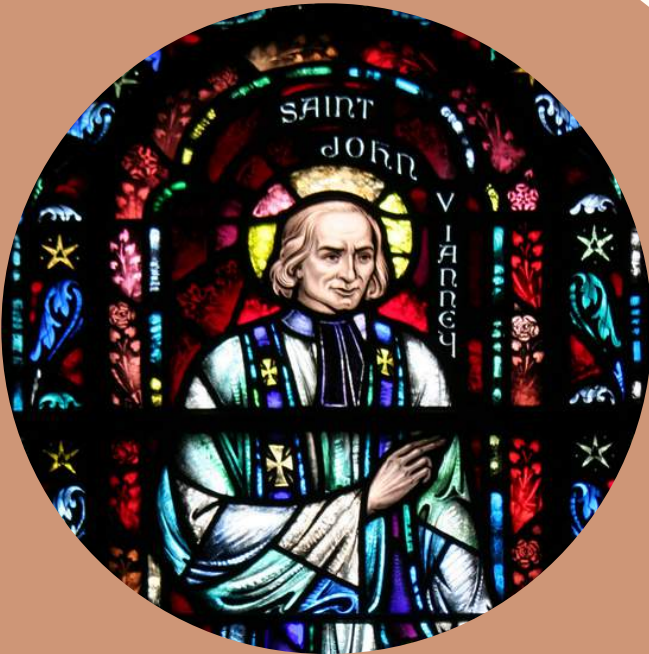
LITURGICAL NOTES



July 29: St. Martha, along with her siblings Mary and Lazarus, welcomed Jesus into her home in Bethany. It was Martha who was distraught that her sister Mary was sitting with Jesus, leaving her to handle alone the chores of hospitality. She witnessed the resurrection of her brother Lazarus from the dead.



July 31: St. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). Wounded in battle as a young soldier, Ignatius was inspired by reading the gospels and the lives of saints. He founded the largest and most influential religious congregation in the Catholic Church. He is also noted for his thirty-day Spiritual Exercises, as well as his Rules for Discernment.



August 4: St. John Vianney, also known as the **Cure of Ars**. Not a strongly academic student, St. John showed incredible piety and love of souls once he was ordained, and gained a reputation as an effective preacher and a patient confessor. He is the patron saint of parish priests.



August 6: Transfiguration of the Lord. Jesus led Peter, James and John up Mount Tabor, and there was transfigured before them, standing with Moses and Elijah, symbols of the Old Testament law and prophets. This was a preview of the glorified body of our Saviour.



August 11: St. Clare of Assisi was a close associate of St. Francis. Clare founded a women's community of contemplative nuns in the spirit of St. Francis, and wrote a rule for their life. These are known as the Poor Clares.



August 14: St. Maximilien Kolbe, a Polish Conventual Franciscan priest, promoted devotion to the Immaculate Virgin Mary through a radio station and several publications. He was sent by Nazi occupiers of Poland during the Second World War to the death camp at Auschwitz. In retaliation for a prisoner who escaped, ten prisoners were chosen to be starved to death. One family man among them cried out for his wife and children; Kolbe offered to take that man's place. After two weeks of suffering, he alone survived. He was injected with carbolic acid to hasten his death.



August 15: The Assumption. At the time of her death, the Blessed Virgin Mary was found to have left her tomb, making her the first to benefit from the "resurrection of the body" While believed throughout the Church for centuries, this dogma was only defined by Pope Pius XII in 1950. Our Archdiocese celebrates its annual pilgrimage in honour of the Assumption of Mary each year on or about August 15th.



August 20: St. Bernard of Clairvaux was a Cistercian monk, engaged in a reform movement among Benedictine monasteries. He was sent to found a new monastery in Clairvaux, and was also instrumental in the establishing the most notable abbey in Europe, Cluny, from which emanated a vast reform movement in monasticism. Bernard was a prolific preacher and writer, influencing the Crusades and the creation of the Knights Templar.



August 21: St. Pius X was the pope from 1903 to his death in 1915. He prepared for the first codified collection of Church laws (the Code of Canon Law) in 1918. He also called for young people to receive the sacraments of Holy Communion and Confirmation at early ages – as young as possible so that youth may benefit from Christ's graces in the sacraments.



August 24: St. Bartholomew, apostle, was one of the twelve chosen followers of Jesus. He is often also referred to by the name Nathaniel. Bartholomew is said to have converted King Polymius of Armenia to Christianity. That country became the first officially Christian nation.



August 27: St. Monica was the mother of St. Augustine of Hippo, father and doctor of the Church. She is known for her prayers and patient suffering as wife to an unfaithful husband and mother to a son who was slow to embrace Christianity as she had.



August 28: St. Augustine, one of the great philosophers of the Church, was slow to come to the Christian faith. He was drawn as a youth to Manichaeism, but with the prayers of his mother St. Monica (feast August 27th) and the preaching of St. Ambrose of Milan, he came to embrace Christianity. He became the bishop of Hippo in north Africa, and wrote many treatises that influenced the development of philosophy and theology in his era and long after. His *Confessions* are a well-read reflection on his coming to faith, and is read by many who seek the same grace in their life.

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Birthdays

July 2nd Sr. Mary Jeanne Davidson, SSND will celebrate her 80th birthday.

Congradutlations!

July 9th Fr. Jeyapaul Packiasamy

July 23rd Fr. Cyril Joseph



Anniversary of Ordination

Fr. Lawrence Odoemena celebrates the **17th anniversary** of his ordination **July 3rd**.

Deacon Gerald Logan was ordained to the permanent diaconate **July 7th, three years ago**.

Fr. Nel Esguerra will celebrate the 12th year of ordination July 18th.

Father Chukwudi Jieme SMMM will celebrate his **4th anniversary** of ordination **July 22nd**.

Fr. Hansel Nwachukwuji SMMM celebrates **six years** on the **25th of July**.

Fr. Bernard Akum SDV celebrates the **third anniversary** of his ordination **July 28th**.

Fr. Isidore Onyeka SMMM was ordained **ten years** on **July 30th**.

Congratulations and fraternal blessings to each one of you.



Archbishop Henri Légaré



Historical Notes

July 9, 1903 Bishop Isidore Clut, auxiliary to Bishop Grouard, passed away in Grouard.

July 13, 1967 Centennial Year of Canada: the sixth Northern Vicariates are elevated to the status of dioceses: Keewatin-LePas and Grouard-McLennan being elevated to Metropolitan Sees.

July 14, 1938 Bishop Ubald Langlois is appointed 3rd Apostolic Vicar of Grouard

July 19, 2004 Anniversary of the death of Archbishop Henri Légaré, second Archbishop of Grouard-McLennan.

July 23, 1998 Anniversary of the sudden passing of Archbishop Henri Goudreault, third Archbishop of Grouard-McLennan.

July 30, 1901 A division to the Vicariate of Athabasca-Mackenzie was established., until then under the leadership of Bishop Grouard, now would be the Vicariate of Mackenzie in the north, and the Vicariate of Athabasca in the south. Bishop Grouard would retain the governance of the Vicariate of Athabasca while Bishop Breynat was appointed to the Vicariate of Mackenzie.

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BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Birthdays

August 1st Fr. Albert Sterzer CSsR will celebrate his 85th birthday. Congratulations Father!

August 10th Fr. Lawrence Odoemena

August 25th Fr. Rajmond Dorowa CSsR

Anniversary of Ordination

August 15, Father Andrew Simiiyu FMH celebrates the **8th anniversary** of his ordination.

August 20, Father Christian Ogbanna SDV will celebrate his **20th anniversary**.

August 22, Father Eucharius Ndzefemiti SDV celebrates the **6th anniversary** of his ordination.

On **August 23rd**, Father Maurice Marion would have celebrated the **13th anniversary** of his priesthood.

August 25, Father Jean Cornelis Nkuanga-Ngoma will celebrate his **30th anniversary** of ordination.

Congratulations and fraternal blessings to each one of you.



Bishop Isidore Clut

Historical Notes

The **3rd of August** is the anniversary of the episcopal ordination of Bishop Isidore Clut, OMI, auxiliary, 1864.

On the **15th of August 2000**, Archbishop Arthé Guimond received episcopal ordination and became the Fourth Archbishop of Grouard-McLennan.



In the realm of the Venerable, Blessed and Holy in Canada

Blessed Frédeéric Janssoone, Franciscan, optional memorial, feast day, **August 5th**

Blessed Marie-Elisabeth Turgeon, Foundress – Sisters of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, feast day, **August 17th**



Blessed Marie-Elisabeth Turgeon

Prayer for Tolerance, Forgiveness, Reconciliation

O God, Creator and Father of all,
with humility we your children acknowledge the relationship of all living things.
For this we thank you, we praise you and we worship you.

We call on you, Great Mystery, the Word made Flesh
– our teacher, prophet and brother –
to open our hearts to all our brothers and sisters,
and with them to grow in the wisdom, honesty, courage and
respectfulness shown in The Sacred Teachings.

Give us the vision and honesty to recognize
that the we are all brothers and sisters of one human family,
created and sustained by the One Creator.
As we deal with many challenges, may we never give way to fear and anger, which can be the
source of division and threat amongst peoples.

We look to how God always gives to us,
as a remedy for sins of prejudice and intolerance.
We see in God the Creator of all things,
One who always provides and is generous
– even given the abuses we have heaped on one another and on the earth.

We see in the Son, Jesus Christ
- the innocent Victim who pours His life blood out from the Cross for all peoples.

We see how the Holy Spirit is God's gift,
alive in our world today
– inspiring vision and hope that we can have
the same mind and heart of God!

May Your Spirit bless the souls
who died at the Kamloops residential school
and all souls who died at residential schools.

May this same Spirit also bring blessing and healing
to all families and communities affected in any way by the schools.

O Creator, show us the way to healing,
forgiveness and reconciliation
and a renewed fellowship.

Amen

*This prayer was written and published by the **Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops** for **National Indigenous Peoples Day, June 21, 2021.***

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Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan

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We want your contributions to this magazine!

To contact the editor for story ideas or to let us know what's going on your parish and faith community e-mail **Kyle Greenham** at: **comdirector.agm@outlook.com** or reach us by phone at **780-532-9766**.

All submissions for the next issue, whether of photos or written pieces, must be given by the **9th of each month**. Your input will be a great help in growing this magazine!

There are also many other features we are working towards to make this magazine an essential resource in your faith life. Stay tuned!



OUR PATRON SAINT

St. Martin of Tours,
patron of our archdiocese,
you showed yourself open to the needs of the poor.
You cut in half what you had, your soldier's mantle, and shared it with a
needy beggar.
We ask your intercession for our local Church, that we may be brave as you
were brave in reaching out to others.
Give us the spiritual insight to see that the many gifts that are given to us
are not for us alone, but for the good of all.
Watch over us as we share our treasures with others, especially with
treasures that are our faith, hope and love.
Open our hearts to others' needs; give us the generosity of true disciples of
the Lord Jesus Christ, and lead us to the fullness of life that is the
inheritance of the pure of heart.

St. Martin of Tours, pray for us.